

Christian Orient

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EDITORIAL

ECUMENICAL DIMENSION OF CANON LAW

George Dmitry Gallaro

CONCILIAR UNITY : A MODEL FOR ECUMENISM

George Mathew

ORIENTALE LUMEN : AN EVALUATION FROM THE SYRIAC PERSPECTIVE

Dr. Joseph Kallarangatt

THE CATHOLIC CHURCHES OF ORIENTAL TRADITION

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An Indian Journal of Eastern Churches for Creative
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ECUMENISM

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Editorial	149
Ecumenical Dimension of Canon Law	151
	<i>George Dmitry Gallaro</i>
Conciliar Unity: A Model for Ecumenism	162
	<i>George Mathew</i>
Orientale Lumen: An Evaluation from the Syriac Perspective	169
	<i>Dr. Joseph Kallarangatt</i>
The Catholic Churches of Oriental Tradition	180
	<i>John Madey</i>
Book Review	192
News	195

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Editorial

The Church of God is one, holy catholic and apostolic. This one Church is a communion of Churches. In the course of time, in this one Church of God divisions and separations have occurred. "The first divisions occurred in the East, either because of disputes over the dogmatic pronouncements of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon or later by the breakdown of ecclesiastical communion between the Eastern Patriarchates and the Roman See" (UR 13). The one Church of God is no more fully united. It is true that the Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church. There are many elements of sanctification outside her catholic boundary. Quite a number of the 'separated' churches are authentic ones. But there no longer exists full communion between the churches.

The one Church of God is divided. The divided Church is a wounded Body. The Church is a weeping mother because of the divisions in her. In this situation no single Church can claim the perfection of oneness, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity. The more the churches are united the more they become one, holy, catholic and apostolic. In the post Vatican II era all the christian denominations have become self-critical and dialogic. There is an organized effort from all the churches to get closer to the common roots and to establish their own authentic identity.

Unity of the Church of God is an ecclesiological imperative. Communion ecclesiology of Vat II is actually an ecumenical ecclesiology. Until full communion is achieved between the Churches ecclesiology should necessarily be ecumenical. One of the specific objectives of the 'Christian Orient' is to foster the ecumenical contacts between different christian denominations in view of the full communion. This is the theological motive of the issue on Ecumenism. In this issue the Christian Orient presents before the readers three scholarly articles of different ecumenical perspectives.

The first article is a scientific presentation of the ecclesiological basis and foundation of Canon Law. The author clearly brings out the intimate relation between the Church and the canonical principles. Canon Laws should not be seen in isolation from the Church. They are to be seen as expressions of the very inner meaning of the Church. In this sense canon Laws have great ecumenical implications too. Canon Laws have ecclesiological foundation and ecumenical implications.

In the article 'Conciliar Unity a Model for Ecumenism' Rev. George Mathew brings out the fact that the different models of Church unity have evolved during the course of history of the universal Church. In this article the emphasis is given to the conciliar model of ecumenism in the light of CSI-CNI-Mar Thoma Churches. It is the Church union through a joint council of Churches which are in full communion status. Church unity is not a mere merging together of different Churches into one. Ecclesial unity must always safeguard the identity, integrity and individuality of all the Churches.

The article 'Orientale Lumen—An Evaluation from the Syriac Perspective' is a critical study on the content and method of the Apostolic Letter Orientale Lumen. The author brings out the two major sections of this Apostolic Letter: the theological section on the Christian East and the ecumenical section on Church Unity. The author employs two approaches to explore the inner meaning of this Letter. On the one hand he presents the main theological expressions of this Letter; on the other hand he brings out the fact that the Syriac Orient is disregarded and the East is almost identified with the Greek East. However, this Letter is an invitation for all the Orientals to be genuinely Oriental. As a whole this Letter is an invitation to work tirelessly for the Christian unity.

"Today we know that unity can be achieved through the love of God only if the Churches want it together, in full respect for the traditions of each and for necessary autonomy. We know that this can take place only on the basis of the love of Churches which feel increasingly called to manifest the one Church of Christ, born from one Baptism and from one Eucharist, and which want to be sisters. As I had occasion to say: 'the Church of Christ is one'. If divisions exist, that is one thing; they must be overcome, but the Church is one, the Church of Christ between East and West can only be one, one and united" (Pope John Paul II, Orientale Lumen, Nu. 20).

Editor

Ecumenical Dimension of Canon Law

The decree *Unitatis Redintegratio* (= The Restoration of Unity) of the Second Vatican Council is still relevant today for a proper understanding of the true meaning of the ecumenical movement.¹

The document defines the basis for ecumenism with the following words: “*Participation in this movement, called ecumenical, entails invoking the triune God and confessing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior*” (EV I, 495). Therefore, ecumenism is a movement that strives toward the unity of all Christians. Hence, it differs from relation with the Jews and dialogue with other religions. Both are important issues, theologically as well as pastorally speaking; however, they are quite distinct.

About relations with Christians not in full communion, Vatican II has explicitly declared: “*For those who believe in Christ and have been truly baptized are in some kind of communion with the Catholic Church*” (EV I, 503). This communion differs both as to the measure that the common tradition is shared by the various communities as well as to the extent of the differences still existing among them. As an example, it can be pointed out that the degree of communion we share with the Orthodox Churches is quite different from the one we share with the ecclesial Communities of the Reformation. These differences notwithstanding, Vatican

II thus speaks about all the Churches and ecclesial Communities: “*For the Spirit of Christ has not refrained from using them as means of salvation*” (EV I, 506).

As a matter of fact, the awareness of this basic truth is at the root of contemporary ecumenism. Indeed, “*no Christian should be satisfied with these imperfect forms of communion. They do not correspond to the will of Christ, and weaken his Church in the exercise of its mission*” (ED, 19). Such is the declaration of the current Ecumenical Directory of the Catholic Church (=ED), which goes on to say that the ecumenical movements’ ultimate purpose is unity which, by its very nature, calls for the full visible communion of all Christians.²

As a result, today’s view of ecumenism consists of a movement ranging from a limited communion already at work among Christians to a full communion as a goal yet to be achieved. It is a diversified movement; it embraces: relations of fellowship with other Christians; theological dialogue to study the differences that still exist; cooperation in practice which makes the existing communion a living thing and facilitates the fuller communion yet to be achieved; and prayer, since, in the final analysis, the ultimate unity is a gift of God, just as the Church itself is a gift of God.

1. *Enchiridion Vaticanum* (=EV), 1, 286–325, Bologna, 1993.

2. *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (=ED), Rome, 1993.

In short, it may be said that ecumenism is a constant growing together toward unity combined with the matching reduction of differences through real convergences which are being positively achieved by the many bilateral dialogues with the larger Christian Communities of the world.³

This attitude, initiated by Vatican II, does not affect the firm conviction of Catholic Christians that Christ's one Church is to be found in the Catholic Church guided by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him.

The *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* ("The Code of Canon Law of the Eastern Churches" = CCEO), in keeping with the teaching of Vatican II,⁴ promotes the ecumenical dialogue in various ways. This dialogue is identified by some attitudes, namely by the recognition of the ecclesial status of non-Catholic Christians, by the legitimacy of their juridical structure, and finally by the easing of norms concerning the admission of a non-Catholic Christian as a member.

To regard the other party as a person capable of dialoguing is the precondition of every true dialogue. With respect to the relation of Catholics with the "*separated brethren*," the decree on ecumenism calls to mind that they are members of "*Communities excluded from full communion with the Catholic Church*;" and it goes on to speak of "*separated Churches and ecclesial Communities*." Non-Catholic Christians therefore are not faithful on the outside; they make up Churches and ecclesial Communities (EV I, 503).

The CCEO devotes one of its thirty chapters, namely the XVIII, to ecumenical relations with other Churches and ecclesial Communities (Canons #902-908). Chapter XVIII opens with a general principle, namely the involvement of the entire Church, "*but most especially of the shepherds of the Churches*," in the concern to restore the visible unity of all baptized Christians (Canon #902); and it goes on immediately to call to mind the special role of the Eastern Catholic Churches of fostering the unity of all the Churches of the eastern tradition "...*first of all through prayer, by the examples of life, by the religious fidelity to the ancient traditions of the Eastern Churches, by better knowledge of each other, and by collaboration and brotherly respect in practice and spirit*" (Canon #903).

The next canons give some special norms to which we shall return; to these canons, the following can be added also: Canon 192/2, which urges the eparchical bishop to work for the promotion of Christian unity; Canons 350/4 and 352/3 on the formation of candidates to holy orders according to the principles of ecumenism; and Canon 634/2 on the need to adapt the principles of Catholic school to the condition of a possible majority of students of non-Catholic belief, "*under the guidance of the appropriate ecclesiastical authority*."

A second component of true dialogue is the recognition that the dialoguing party be allowed to organize its life in total freedom; in our case, that each Church or ecclesial Community be capable to choose for itself a suitable disciplinary structure. The decree on ecumenism, when speaking

3. D. Valentini (By), *Dialoghi ecumenici ufficiali. Bilanci e prospettive* ("Official Ecumenical Dialogues. Assessments & Outlooks"), Rome, 1983.

4. EV, XII, Bologna, 1992.

of the special consideration to be given to Eastern Churches not yet in full communion with Rome, emphasizes the legitimacy of their self-government (EV I, 552). The CCEO, on its part, in two canons –#780-781– recognizes the marriage laws of non-Catholic Christians.

Through Canons #896–901, the CCEO also provides for and regulates the acceptance of a non-Catholic Christian into the Catholic Church. At first, such occurrence would seem to run against the ecumenical movement, which strives to create a convergence of the Catholic Church and the dialoguing Church or ecclesial Community toward the attainment of full visible unity; while the fact that individual persons or groups of persons leave their own Church or ecclesial Community to join the Catholic Church would seem to defeat the very purpose of the dialogue.

On its part, the Catholic Church must avoid any form of proselytism; however, it cannot but honour the freedom of conscience of those who desire to become its members. Canon 896 states that “*no other burdens but necessary ones be enjoined*” upon non-Catholic Christians who spontaneously request to be accepted into the Catholic Church. The statement is obvious in its general meaning, and follows the teaching of the decree “*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*” (=“Eastern Churches”) on the Eastern Catholic Churches.⁵ The pronouncement can be considered a direct source for Canon 897, according to which “a Christian faithful of an Eastern non-Catholic Church is to be received into the Catholic Church with only the profession of the Catholic faith, after

doctrinal and spiritual preparation according to each one’s condition.”

The remaining canons take into account some concrete cases relating to the validity of holy orders conferred by non-Catholic Churches.

Let us go back now to the seven canons of Chapter XVIII which contain the norms concerning ecumenical relations with our non-Catholic brothers and sisters:

- * Canon 902: prayer and participation of all Catholic Christians in promotional works for Church unity;
- * Canon 903: special task of the Eastern Catholic Churches toward the unity of all Christian faithful;
- * Canon 904: promotion of the ecumenical movement in every *sui juris* Church, particularly in the eparchies;
- * Canon 905: prudence in ecumenical work, by avoiding all negative attitudes;
- * Canon 906: ecumenical education and formation of Catholic Christians;
- * Canon 907: religious freedom of Christian faithful and ecumenical relations;
- * Canon 908: collaboration of all Christian believers in the various social and charitable works.

All these norms relating to the ecumenical work of Catholic Christians become not simply pastoral suggestions but a canonical obligation as well.

Canon 902: “*Since concern for the restoration of the unity of all Christians*

5. EV, I, 264–285, Bologna, 1993.

belongs to the entire Church, all Christian faithful, especially pastors of the Church, shall pray for that fullness of unity desired by the Lord, and work zealously participating in the ecumenical work brought about by the grace of the Holy Spirit.”

Canon 755/1 of the Code of Canon Law (=CCL) of the Latin Church contains a similar norm: “*It is within the special competence of the entire college of bishops and of the apostolic see (of Rome) to promote and direct the participation of Catholics in the ecumenical movement, whose purpose is the restoration of unity among all Christians...”*⁶

Collaboration among the Churches, or better yet in the ecumenical movement, is aimed at restoring unity (“*unitatis redintegratio*”) and establishing unity (“*unitatis instauratio*”) among all baptized in Christ. These directives go back to the decree on ecumenism according to which “*the restoration of unity is the concern of the whole Church, faithful and clergy alike... This concern itself reveals to some extent the bond of fellowship among all Christians...*” (EV I, 519).

And again: “*The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council. Christ the Lord founded one Church, and one Church only. Nevertheless, many Christian Communities claim... that they are followers of the Lord; however, they are divided in their convictions and go their different ways, as if Christ himself were divided. Such division is clearly contrary to Christ's will*” (EV I, 494).

The directive of the canon quoted above (#902) must be viewed in the context of these conciliar goals as well as of following documents

issued to implement the Council. The goal of the ecumenical commitment of all Christians is precisely the restoration of full visible unity for the entire Church of Christ. Today this unity does not exist, since “*... even in the beginnings of the one and only Church of God there arose certain rifts... and in subsequent centuries much more extensive dissensions made their appearance, and large Communities came to be separated from the full communion of the Catholic Church...*” (EV I, 503).

The ED furthermore states that “*... this unity by no means requires the sacrifice of the rich diversity of spirituality, discipline, liturgical rites and elaborations of revealed truth that has grown up among Christians in the measure that this diversity remains faithful to the apostolic Tradition*” (ED#20).

The same ED, dealing with the Church as communion, further notes that, as a matter of fact both historically and theologically, unity is effected in the context of a rich diversity. Indeed, diversity is a dimension of the very universality of the Church of Christ. Nevertheless, the ED points out that the wealth of this diversity may cause some tensions within the communion. These very tensions may be the source of progress; however, when they go beyond the limit set by the apostolic tradition, they become diversities that are incompatible with true communion.

It is, therefore, quite logical to conclude that the one Church cannot be viewed as one pleases according to agreements that are rather compromises. The right notion of the Church arises from understanding the will of Christ the Lord, as it is

6. EV, VIII, 637–833, Bologna, 1984.

handed down to us by Sacred Scripture and the Apostolic Tradition. In the dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium* (= "The Light of the Nations,")⁷ Vatican II has reminded us that the unity of the Church requires unity of faith, of sacraments and of government (EV I, 305).

Canon 903: "*The Eastern Catholic Churches have a special duty of fostering unity among all Eastern Churches, first of all through prayer, by the example of life, by the religious fidelity to the ancient traditions of the Eastern Churches, by better knowledge of each other, and by collaboration and brotherly respect in practice and in spirit.*"

As one can see, the text of this canon corresponds to #24 of the decree on the Eastern Catholic Churches (EO). From several papal documents, it can be stated that before the Second Vatican Council the popes, presiding over the universal communion, always had the portion not yet in full communion with Rome before their eyes when dealing with the Eastern Catholic Christians. To the Catholic Christians they proposed the reasons for a Catholic witness, in the sense that they are the testing ground where the separated brothers and sisters should be able to see what they themselves are to become once the full visible unity is achieved; that's why they are exhorted. The non-Catholic portion instead is invited to reflect upon the reasons in favor of a full unity by considering that such union has already borne good fruits among the Catholic brothers and sisters.

Indeed, from one pope to the next, we find a notable gradual emphasis in the presentation of the inner reasons for unity and in the very choice of words.

As an example for all, let us quote from a speech addressed to the Melkites by Pope Pius XII on May 16, 1939: "We have already so spoken to the other Eastern Brothers (and Sisters), and we like to repeat it to you, who are heirs of a most noble and ancient tradition: nowadays, when many people feel the need for unity, yours is a glorious role, as indeed it should be. The basilicas of Hauran and Syria, where from very early on and for a long time the splendid Byzantine rites have been celebrated, appear to us as a symbol, and utter to you an appeal: the time has come when sons (and daughters) of the Father's house must multiply their zeal to reveal to their brothers (and sisters) the home they are looking for and to help them to cross over the threshold welcoming them... Strive to promote, in the Eastern lands Christ's kingdom in unity".⁸

As a consequence, the Eastern Catholic Churches are seen as being called to the delicate but at once exciting task of "*promoting the unity of all Christians, Eastern Christians in particular*".⁹ Within this perspective, Canon 903 appropriates the principles of the decree on ecumenism, thus disproving any possible hypothetical contrast between the decree *Unitatis Redintegratio* (= "The Restoration of

7 EV I, 120–263, Bologna, 1993.

8 Pius XII, *Discorsi and radiomessaggi* (= "Sermons and Radio Speeches"), I, Rome, 1940, pp. 125–126.

9 S. Manna G. Distante, *Orientalium Ecclesiarium* (= "The Eastern Churches"), Alexandria, 1986.

Unity") and the decree *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* (= "Eastern Churches").

To carry out this task, the Eastern Catholic Churches are urged to resort to prayer, living example, religious fidelity to the ancient Eastern tradition, knowledge of each other, co-operation and respect for things and persons. We regard these exhortations quite important to eliminate any superior attitude of Catholic Christians toward Orthodox Christians. Daily experience confirms that not infrequently the opinions of Catholic Christians about Orthodox Christians are not without hostility, occasional disrespect and rash judgements, which certainly is not of help to their task. Indeed, it is amid difficulties that perseverance is tested and patience required. The road to follow by Eastern Catholics has been lucidly illustrated by the deceased Melkite Patriarch Maximos IV: "We have a two-fold mission to accomplish within the Catholic Church. We must fight to ensure that Latinism and Catholicism are not synonymous, that Catholicism remains open to every culture, every spirit, and every form of organization compatible with the unity of faith and love. At the same time, by our example, we must enable the Orthodox Church to recognize that a union with the great Church of the West, with the See of Peter, can be achieved without their being compelled to give up Orthodoxy or any of the spiritual treasures of the apostolic and patristic East which is open toward the future no less than toward the past."¹⁰

By so doing, the way toward total unity is made ready; on the contrary, by giving in to compromise or accepting assimilation, unnecessary obstacles are created, thus delaying the attainment of the hoped for goal.

Canon 904-#1: "*The undertakings of the ecumenical movement in every Church sui iuris are to be diligently encouraged by special norms of particular law, while the Apostolic Roman See directs the movement for the universal Church.*"

#2: "*For this purpose, there should be in each individual Church sui iuris a commission of experts on ecumenical matters, to be constituted, if the circumstances warrant it, in consultation with the patriarchs and eparchical bishops of other Churches sui iuris who exercise their power in the same territory.*"

#3: "*It pertains to the eparchical bishops to promote a council for ecumenical efforts for their individual eparchies, or if it seems better, for many eparchies together; in those eparchies which cannot have their own council, there should be at least one member of the Christian faithful appointed by the eparchical bishop with the special function of promoting this movement.*"

This canon goes one step further than the previous norm of Canon 903. The ED as well, in the second chapter, gives practical directives concerning "*the organization of the efforts toward the unity of the faithful in the Catholic Church.*"

"Through its particular Churches, the Catholic Church is present in many localities and regions in which it lives together with other Churches and ecclesial Communities. Such regions have their distinctive spiritual, ethnic, political and cultural characteristics. In many cases one finds in these regions the highest religious authority of other Churches and ecclesial Communities: these regions often correspond to the territory of a

10 Maximos IV, La Chiesa melkita al Concilio ("The Melkite Church at the Council"), Bologna 1969, p. 235.

Synod of Eastern Catholic Churches or of an Episcopal Conference" (ED, #37).

"Therefore, a Catholic particular Church, or several particular Churches, acting closely together may find themselves in a very favourable position to make contact with other Churches and ecclesial Communities at this level. They may be able to establish with them fruitful ecumenical relations which contribute to the wider ecumenical movement" (ED, # 38).

"The Second Vatican Council specifically entrusted the ecumenical task "to the Bishops everywhere in the world for their diligent promotion and prudent guidance." This directive, which has already been acted upon often by individual Bishops, Synods of Eastern Catholic Churches and Episcopal Conferences, has been incorporated into the Canon Law of the Latin and Eastern Churches" (ED, # 39).

"In the light of this special competence for promoting and guiding ecumenical work, it is the responsibility of the individual diocesan Bishop, or of Synods of Eastern Catholic Churches or of Episcopal Conferences to establish norms according to which the persons or commissions described below are to carry out the activities ascribed to them and to oversee the implementation of these norms. Furthermore, care should be taken that those to whom these ecumenical responsibilities are to be assigned have a proper knowledge of the Catholic principles of ecumenism and are seriously prepared for their task" (ED, # 40).

Canon 905: "In fulfilling ecumenical work especially through open and frank dialogue and common undertakings with other Christians, due prudence has to be exercised, avoiding the danger of false irenicism, indifferentism and immoderate zeal."

Today's ecumenical movement strives to fully restore the visible unity of all Christians. This is "*the sacred mystery of the unity of the Church, in Christ and through Christ, while the action of the Holy Spirit produces a variety of gifts. It is a mystery that finds its highest model and source in the unity of the persons of the Trinity: the unity of the one God, the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit*" (EV I, 502). In other words, this mystery is about the unity willed by Jesus Christ "*through the faithful preaching of the Gospel by the apostles and their successors—the bishops with Peter's successor at the head;—through their administering the sacraments and governing the Church in love, Jesus Christ wills his people to increase under the action of the Holy Spirit...*" (EV I, 500).

Therefore, "*the way in which the Catholic faith is expressed should never become an obstacle to dialogue with other Christians. It is, of course, essential that the doctrine should be clearly presented in its entirety. Nothing is so alien to the Spirit of ecumenism as a false irenicism, in which the purity of Catholic doctrine suffers loss, and its assured and genuine meaning is clouded*" (EV I, 534).

In our days, there surfaces at times a certain trend toward doctrinal confusion. As a consequence, it is very important to avoid abuses that could contribute to it or lead to doctrinal indifference. If the Church's mandates in this field were to go unheeded, the progress toward the authentic search of full unity among all Christians would be hindered.

As Canon 905 implies, indifferentism, irenicism and immoderate zeal are opposed to genuine ecumenical action. *Indifferentism* is the attitude that holds as equally good all truths professed by the various religions,

Communities and Churches. In the presence of so many religious beliefs, often in conflict with one another, one is tempted to isolate oneself in a detached attitude: the important thing—it is affirmed—is to be good. Thus one forgets that, before God, we cannot act superficially or pretend that, for salvation, only personal good intentions matter. Indifferentism is opposed to ecumenism because it puts both truth and error on the same level. For each Christian, Christ is the truth: he died that we be liberated from the slavery of “the master of deceit” in order to be free in the truth. Hence, indifference before Christ-truth is equivalent to denial of him; and, with the denial of Christ, no “ecumenism” is possible but the ecumenism of the Antichrist!

Irenicism is closely linked to indifferentism in that it holds that, building unity among the various Churches, only what unites should be considered, disregarding what divides. Catholic Christians hold that irenicism claims “*to do away with doctrinal difficulties while striving to nullify or hide the official declarations which the Church's teaching holds to be mandatory and definitive*” (Paul VI). However, it is not possible to harmonize all things indifferently. Experience shows that, in bilateral relations, if the heart of unresolved difficulties is not addressed, further causes for yet future rifts are created. And indeed, there may arise in the mind of the counterpart the suspicion that he is being deceived or that unity is being sought at the price of truth. Irenicism is opposed to ecumenism because, in the final analysis, both the frailty and the sin of baptized believers and Churches are not taken seriously. To create the communion of all the Churches, it is necessary to face doctrinal difficulties and central issues which divide; one must, indeed, begin with what unites, but without ignoring what divides;

what is negative in division must be overcome in the light of what unites.

Immoderate zeal is the attempt to bring about true religion, one and universal, through ecumenical-missionary methods and means which are radical, neither approved nor encouraged by the official ecclesiastical authorities. It seems to ignore the fact that God has revealed himself fully in Christ. It is opposed to genuine ecumenism because it imposes Christ and his Gospel disregarding the freedom of God's sons and daughters, namely the innate religious right of every human being.

The ED presents the content of this canon more at length in its No. s 205–209.

Canon 906: “*That it may become clearer to the Christian faithful what is truly taught and handed down by the Catholic Church and other Churches or ecclesial Communities, a special effort is to be made by preachers of the word, those who control the means of social communication, and all those who dedicate themselves as teachers or as directors to Catholic schools and especially in institutes of higher studies.*”

According to the mind of the Fathers of Vatican II, concern for unity is essential. All Christian believers must be animated by the spirit of ecumenism, regardless of the mission or tasks which they must carry out in the world or within society. The grace of unity which Christ prayed for on behalf of his followers means primarily unity of the believer with Christ, in his love to God and to neighbour; in second place, communion with both the universal and the particular Church; and finally, a dynamic search for fullness of unity with all baptized Christians and other Churches. The means which

are suggested as spiritual guidelines for all Christian believers are:

- * constantly to listen, study and comply with the Word of God;
- * to preach within or without the liturgical context;
- * catechesis aimed at deepening the life of faith;
- * liturgy, in the conviction that it contributes to unity;
- * spirituality, which must be made ever more authentic and must promote conversion of the heart;
- * collaboration in charitable and social programs,

The environs best suited to ecumenical education are:

- * the family, as it is the first place where unity is created, in love and the encounter of individuals;
- * the parish, as it is a community gathered around the Word and the Eucharist;
- * the school of every level and kind, which must aim at educating the mind and the heart by preparing for truth, moral values and good behaviour;
- * groups, associations and ecclesial movements, which must be ever more imbued with genuine ecumenical spirit against all trends leading to narrow-mindedness and isolationism.¹¹

The ED develops this canon in Chapter III – Formation to ecumenism in the Catholic Church – giving additional directives and practical suggestions, especially in No. s 58–64 (“Education of all the Faithful”).

Canon 907: “*Directors of schools, hospitals and other similar Catholic institutions are to see to it that other Christians who are visiting or working in the institutions are able to receive spiritual aid and the sacraments from their own ministers.*”

For pastors and pastor collaborators, formation to ecumenism is indispensable since, upon their training, the necessary education and spiritual formation of the faithful and religious depend to a great extent. In general, they must be trained by developing, in an integrated manner, all their human talents which make a person accepted and trustworthy, and in particular by enhancing their ability to dialogue by way of a specific doctrinal formation.

Essentially, such doctrinal formation must strive to acquire an ecumenical mental attitude, which is gained by serious and continuous studies. An ecumenical formation leading to the practice of unity must bring pastoral collaborators to the conviction that, to achieve unity, we must love one another and, to love one another, we must know one another. With so many conflicts and misunderstandings in its past, ecumenism cannot but bring about a kind of self-knowledge not purely intellectual, but participative, having its roots in “the reasons of the heart.”

Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize the ecumenical interaction of the various methods, fully respecting the supremacy of truth and distinguishing between revealed truth and purely theological principles. During the period of teaching and studying, it is important to emphasize: the elements of the Christian heritage

11. C. Dallari, *Chiamati all'unità* (= “Called to Unity”), Padua, 1993, Ch. III/2

which are common to all ecclesial traditions; the wealth of spirituality and doctrine distinctive of each tradition; and the points of doctrinal disagreement in the context of a deeper understanding in the light of the Word of God.¹² Moreover, a formal course on ecumenism is also called for as well as, where possible, practical ecumenical experiences through meetings, dialogues and various collaborations.

Doctrinal formation and experience is also necessary for other non-ordained ministers, for catechists, teachers, lay animators as well as for members of religious orders.

The ED once again is very helpful in this regard with its fifth chapter—Living communion and spiritual action among the baptized, –particularly in Nos. s 122–142: “*In Catholic schools and institutions, every effort should be made to respect the faith and conscience of students or teachers who belong to other Churches or ecclesial Communities*” (ED, # 141).

“*In hospitals, homes for the aged and similar institutions conducted by Catholics, the authorities should promptly advise priests and ministers of other Communities of the presence of their faithful and afford them every facility to visit these persons and given them spiritual and sacramental ministrations under dignified and reverent conditions, including the use of the chapel*” (ED #142).

Can. 908: “*With due regard to the norms on communicatio in sacris (= sharing of sacred rites), it is desirable that the Catholic faithful undertake any project in which they could cooperate with other Christians, not alone but*

together, such as works of charity and social justice, defense of the dignity and fundamental rights of the human person, promotion of peace, days of commemoration for the country, national holidays.”

The freedom of the act of faith needs the oil of charity which eliminates the dangerous frictions coming from prejudice and animosity. Hence, Canon 908, in keeping with the decree on ecumenism, enjoins the practical collaboration with separated brothers and sisters, by emphasizing the duty of Christian witness, which is common to all, and already unites them to one another, although still in a imperfect way. “*Cooperation among all Christians vividly expresses the relationship which in fact already unites them*” (EV I, 537). It is also the sign of the presence of Christ who gives unity through the ministry of those who profess to be his disciples. The cooperation of all Christians “*better illustrates the image of Christ-servant*.”

This canon defines, even without fixing definitive limits, the ground of a certain common action. The religious aspect is first considered, namely the norms about sacred rites (*communicatio in sacris*); there follows at length the collaboration in the social field, already at work in some countries. This must be strengthened and enhanced, especially in developing countries in order to defend the dignity of the human person; to promote peace; to bring about the social implementation of the Gospel; to foster science and the arts in the light of the Christian spirit; as well as by using remedies of every kind to come to grip with the afflictions of our times such as hunger and calamities, illiteracy, poverty and indigence, lack of shelter and the unequal

12. *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, by the Pontifical Biblical Commission, Rome, 1993, Ch. IV.

distribution of wealth. Everyone is called to this campaign of charity, those people in particular, however, who are marked with the name of Christ.

The canonical norm, as well as the decree on ecumenism, does not intend to indulge in actions while neglecting the difficulties caused by opposing doctrines, but wishes to complement the doctrinal outlook with the unavoidable facts of life. Indeed, “*all believers in Christ can, through such cooperation, easily learn to acquire a better knowledge and appreciation of one another, so as to make the road which leads to Christian unity more smooth*” (EV I, 537).

The road is long, and the goal is in God’s hands. We must walk along this road with courage and steadfastness, according to the directives given by the appropriate ecclesial authorities, trusting in the help of the One who offered up himself for the unity of his Church.

In concluding these thoughts on the current Church law, we must state that the insertion in the CCEO of a chapter on the promotion of unity of all Christians gives juridical form to the declaration of Vatican II, namely that “*it is the special task of the Eastern Catholic Churches to promote the unity of all Christians, most especially of the Eastern Christian*” (EV I, 485).

With the CCEO (and with the Ecumenical Directory), what was a simple exhortation is now a canonical norm of Christian life. The Eastern Catholic Christians have the same traditions as the Eastern non-Catholic Christians. This is the basic reason why it is especially incumbent on Catholics to promote the ecumenical action toward visible, full perfect unity.

Ours is not an exhaustive presentation of what the CCEO says about ecumenism.

Some aspects should be explored and analyzed more fully. From the point of view of ecumenism, the CCEO is important not only for Catholic Christians but for non-Catholic Christians as well. Ecumenism is one of the attributes of the new law of the Catholic Church. We are not dealing simply with a revision of previous directives on the subject, but with a significant change (*novus habitus mentis* = “a new mental attitude”). Pursuit of unity and ecumenical concern are a necessary dimension of the life of the Church as a whole; it does not involve only ecclesiastical authorities, but it calls for a dialogue among the faithful as well. If Vatican II defines the Church as missionary (EV I, 1090), it can also be affirmed that the Church is, by its very nature, ecumenical as well.

Rev. George Dmitry Gallaro is the Rector of St. Gregory Seminary in the Eparchy of Newton, Massachusetts. He holds degrees from Rome’s Angelicum, Anselmianum, and Orientale.

Conciliar Unity: a Model for Ecumenism

Introduction

This century has witnessed considerable number of Church union efforts. Two world wars, the urge for freedom from the colonial powers, national awareness etc. contributed to transnational and intra-national endeavours for unity of churches. The Christian awareness that 'division is sin' and 'unity of all God's people' is the will of God also accelerated this attempt. The formation of World Council of Churches (W. C. C.) in 1948, challenged the churches worldwide, to come out from their century old isolation and share the common platform in matters of faith and common witness. Thus since the formation of WCC or even before that, each period presented some models of Church union. We cannot say which is ideal or not. In this discussion, we are focussing our attention to 'Conciliar Unity' as a model for Ecumenism, in the light and experience of the Conciliar Unity that has been achieved within the Mar Thoma Church, Church of South India and Church of North India (MTC-CSI-CNI). An evaluation is being attempted towards the end of this paper.

The need for unity

Christians confess the church as one, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic (Niceo-Constantinople Creed). The

task of the Church is to express this unity visibly and effectively. The unity we seek is grounded in biblical witness. In New Testament, we see a variety of ways and images to this unity. The unity and the very being of the Church are rooted in the unity of Trinity because there is only one God, one Lord, one Holy Spirit, one Church.¹ Division breaks up the church and therefore is considered as sinful. The presence of a divided church is a counter witness to the confession of one Church. Recognition of this reality brought the modern Ecumenical Movement which challenged the churches from a divided to a united Church. The formation of WCC encouraged the church unity efforts. The first constitutional function of the WCC is "to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one Eucharistic Fellowship expressed in Lordship and in common life in Christ, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe."²

Models of Unity

Models of unity are statements of the nature and form of full visible unity of the Church which is the final goal of the ecumenical movement. These models cannot be considered as competitive; their value is in helping the ecumenical movement to define a form of unity which enables all christians in their proper diversity

1. Eph. 4:4-5.

2. The Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement, WCC, Geneva, (1991), p. 1039.

to experience themselves as belonging to the one body of Christ.³

a. Federal Union

Federal union is a union of Churches in which each individual church will maintain its organisational, liturgical and doctrinal identity but will co-operate through a federal council for common evangelistic programmes.

b. Organic Union

By organic union we mean that the united churches gave up their separate identity and came into a new church with a distinct liturgical and organisational identity. This model emphasised nothing less than a death or rebirth of many forms of church life as we have known them. The Church of South India and Church of North India are examples of this model.

c. Conciliar Union

Conciliar union defined at the Fifth Assembly of WCC at Nairobi (1975), is a vision of how organic unity might be realized among the various local united churches. Though separated by culture, space or time, they could periodically express their unity through councils of representatives of all the local churches at various geographical levels. The Nairobi Conference declared that: "The one church is to be envisioned as a conciliar fellowship of local churches which are themselves truly united. In this conciliar fellowship, each local church possesses, in communion with the others, the fullness of catholicity, witness to the same Apostolic faith

and therefore recognises the others as belonging to the same church of Christ and guided by the same spirit. They are found together because they have received the same Baptism and share in the same Eucharist, they recognise each other's members and ministries" ...⁴

d. Communion of Communions

This has been proposed by Cardinal Willebrands, Secretary of Potical council for promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) in 1970. The confessions will continue with the frame work of a larger ecclesial allegiance with a common dogma, sacraments and basic ordering of ministry. Each confession with its characteristic expression of theological emphasis and method, discipline and liturgical life and spirituality, embodying a distinctive types of one faith, the confession should be the form and expression of ecumenicity.⁵

Conciliar Unity a model for Ecumenism

So far we were trying to draw different models of Church union that has been developed during the course of history. Now we will be looking in detail the conciliar fellowship that has been achieved through the Joint Council of the Mar Thoma-CSI-CNI churches.

'Conciliarity belongs to the very nature of the Church. By conciliarity we mean the fact that the church in all times needs assemblies to represent it and has in fact felt this need. These assemblies may differ greatly. However conciliarity is a constant structure of the Church. Synods and councils are the historical expression

3. The Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement, p. 1041.

4. Quoted from: T. John, (ed), *Naveekaranathinte Thritheeya Kanaka Jubilee Tiruvalla* (1986), p. 165.

5. The Dictionary, op. cit., p. 1042.

of this basic necessity. They are to be found in one form or the other in all churches'.⁶

Ever since the Uppsala Assembly (1968), the concept of 'Church as conciliar fellowship' played a significant role in the Faith and Order discussions. The concept recommended itself because it enabled a clearer understanding of the universality of the church. Each local church lives in fellowship with others, each depending on the others, each responsible for the others. Though each retains its individuality, they together form one body throughout the world. It is capable of facing new issues because it is prepared to take them up in conciliar exchange since each part is committed to being accountable to the whole fellowship, it need not be afraid of diversity.⁷

The fifth Assembly of WCC at Nairobi discussed at length 'the concept of Conciliar fellowship'. It expresses the unity of the Church separated by distance, culture and time, a unity which is publicly manifested when the representatives of these local churches gather together for a common meeting. It also refers to a quality of life within each local church. It underlines true unity is not monolithic, does not override the special gifts given to each member and each local church, but cherishes and protects them. The true conciliarity is the reflection in the life of the church of the Triune

being of God. It is the unity for which Christ prayed when he asked the Father that his disciples might be one as the Father and the Son are one.⁸

The Conciliar Unity of M.T.C.-CSI-CNI

The Mar Thoma Church is believed to have been founded by Saint Thomas, one of the Apostles of Jesus Christ, and known by the Apostle. During 19th century it underwent a reformation through the influence of the Anglican Missionaries (CMS).⁹ The Church of South India (CSI) was inaugurated on 27th September 1947 by the organic union of four different churches of the Protestant tradition. Similarly the Church of North India (CNI) was formed by merging six churches of the protestant origin. This church was inaugurated on 29th November 1970. The MTC entered into full communion with CSI in 1971 and with the CNI in 1973.

The concept of conciliar unity met with wider approval in all Christian traditions. The MTC-CSI-CNI entered into a conciliar fellowship through a Joint Council in 1978. This model of unity emphasised the elements of variety and individuality. Councils are gathering of Churches which are different from one another, yet respect these differences, fully recognising one another's Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry and meeting together for common conseil and common action.

6. Faith and Order Paper No. 50, WCC, Geneva (1968), p. 50.

7. David Johnson, Uppsala to Nairobi, London (1975) p. 75.

8. David M. Paton (ed.) Breaking Barriers, (Nairobi), 1975, London, p. 60.

9. See Juhanon Mar Thoma, Christianity in India and a brief History of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, Madras (1952).

The Formation of Joint Council of MTC-CSI-CNI.¹⁰

Through the formation of a Joint Council of MTC-CSI-CNI, the Ecumenical relationship of these churches entered into a new dimension in 1978. It is a result of deeper longing on the part of the three churches to manifest the God-given unity in Christ beyond a full communion relationship. In 1975 the joint theological commission of the three churches issued a five point declaration among which the call to constitute a Joint Council was an important one.¹¹ On the basis of the recommendations of the theological commission these churches decided to come together in a conciliar federal set up. Three churches decided to co-operate in the areas of Mission, national concerns, and in matters of peace and justice and to remain as separate churches, keeping separate identity and autonomy of each church. Although the joint council has only advisory powers in relation to matters internal to the constituent churches, the council can act on its own in matters relating to common responsibility and action.¹²

In the inaugural message given to member churches it is stated that "we thank and praise God that our three churches have been led to the formation of a Joint Council as visible expression of the unity we have as one church in the Lord Jesus Christ. The three churches have been in full communion with one another.

There has been theological agreement about the Scriptures, the historic creeds as witnessing to the Apostolic Faith, two sacraments of Baptism and Lord's Supper, and the Episcopate which is both historical and constitutional. On the basis of their common faith and ecclesiastic fellowship they have been mutually accepting one another's members and ministers. The churches have been led to express this unity in a more visible form by the formation of the Joint Council consisting of 5 Bishops 10 clergy and 15 lay persons from each of the three churches making a total unity of members.¹³

Russel Chandran, the founder-Secretary of the Joint Council expressed his view on this as follows "The formation of the Joint Council bringing together the CSI-CNI-MTC is one of most important ecumenical events in the Indian Church in recent years." It was noted that what the three churches have been led to adopt is a new and unique model different from the earlier models of organic unity. But that the three churches have established a Joint Council to express their unity certainly implies that they are now involved together in conciliar unity."¹⁴

The Ecumenical Movement has progressed on the very local level in India, than anywhere else. It is the ecumenical urge and ecumenical love and ecumenical humility to listen to others and respect the

10. See George Mathew, Ecumenical Involvement of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, *Christian Orient*, Vol. XV., No. 4. 1994, pp. 170-181.
11. The Minutes of the Joint Theological Commission of CSI-CNI-MTC Madras (1975).
12. The Declaration of 'The Joint Theological Commission' is cited in: Mar Thoma Syrian Church Directory, Tiruvalla (1983), pp. 110-111.
13. M. J. Joseph (ed), Conciliar Fellowship, Manganam (1979), pp. 22-23.
14. Russel Chandran, Conciliar Unity, in Mathai Zachariah (ed), Ecumenism in India, Delhi, (1980), pp. 65-80.

priesthood of all believers that have made possible the Joint Council of CSI-CNI-MTC. The Joint Council is a unique model of Ecumenism and is an ecumenical instrument working towards a visible manifestation of unity of three autonomous churches, yet living and acting like one church of Christ in India.¹⁵

Programme of Unity

1. The celebration of the festival of unity in the second Sunday of November each year; local congregations are urged to celebrate the Eucharist in a rite not that of their own.
2. Publication of common Book of liturgy to familiarise the people with the Eucharistic rite of other churches.
3. Publication of information literature to pass information to other churches.
4. Formation of regional Joint councils to manifest the unity at (eight) regional levels.
5. Joint Evangelic Mission in Sikkim with resources sharing from all churches.
6. Participation in decision making bodies of member churches as observers.

The names of the heads of three churches are also mentioned during the great intercession at the Eucharist of each church.¹⁶

The formation of Joint Council and the unity of the churches open

further avenues of wider ecumenism. We need to point out some areas:

1. Formation of an Indian Church.
2. Expression of Unity through the Joint Council.
3. Mutual participation in the life of other churches.
4. Possibilities to build up united churches, institutions and Joint mission and evangelism.
5. Unity in diversity.

These three churches have their own separate historical, cultural, ecclesiastical, liturgical, linguistic and other backgrounds. Organisationally they are three separate churches. The MTC has an Eastern Church tradition and is ancient in its origin. The CSI and CNI have distinct geographical boundaries and are union of different churches with western missionary background. Inspite of such differences and diversities, they have a relationship with one another which is the basic dimension of unity, viz, common faith and mutually recognised sacraments, ministry and membership. The Joint Council is intended to give visible expression to this inner unity acknowledged by the three churches. The decision to be united through a Joint Council makes the model of unity a unique one. It is rather obedient to the call of Christ, that through the oneness of his people the world will know Him as good news and the one through whom God's salvation came to this world. The fulfilment of the Church's mission and the evangelistic task demands the visible manifestation of the unity of the Church. The

15. A. C. Dharmaraj, 'The Indian Response to Ecumenism', in Mathai Zachariah (ed), cited above pp. 46-54.
 16. Russel Chandran (ed), *The Joint Council of CSI-CNI-MTC, a Brief History and Interpretation*, New Delhi, (1984).

Joint Council is intended to help the three churches to act as one church in India.

Present Position of the Church Unity

There was considerable progress and enthusiasm in the collective witness of these churches. There were regional Joint Council meetings, Joint pastor's and Youth meetings. A joint missionary activity has also been started by the member churches. But at the same there are some problems also involved at present on the question of a common name.

The idea of a common name and its rejection

In the recommendations of the Joint theological commission, there is a proposal for a common name (item No. 5) as an expression of the existing unity. 'A common name for the three churches should be adapted if the supreme decision-making bodies of each church approve it.' The proposed name was BHARAT CHRISTIAN CHURCH.¹⁷

After due consideration, the CSI and CNI approved the proposal for a common name. But the Church Representative Assembly (Mandalam), the supreme decision making body of the MTC, rejected this proposal. The CSI and CNI share a protestant tradition and came under union of different such traditions. To them accepting a common is not a matter of difficulty because organic union is a model well experienced to them. To the Mar Thoma Church, it is a question of identity. Theologically she shares a near agreement. As an Eastern Reformed Church, Mar Thoma

Church wants to maintain her oriental heritage and nature, and the Syrian liturgical traditions. The Mar Thoma Church, with other Oriental churches, shares a celibate Episcopacy. It is feared that adoption of a common name will gradually lead to the neglect of the Oriental heritage of the Church.¹⁸

The hasteness for a common name as a sign of visible unity that has been achieved and rejection of that proposal by the Mar Thoma Church created some stagnation and lethargy in the activities of the Joint Council. In 1994 the number of members in the Joint Council has been reduced to 45 from 90 for practical reasons. Mar Thoma Church is not ready for an organic union and that has been well explained from early time onwards. The M.T.C. believes that the conciliar model will better preserve the authentic contribution of the diverse tradition in their theology, liturgy and church polity. The organic model of Church unity, is not the viable model. 'Reconciled diversity' and 'ecclesial selfhood' is emphasised even at the WCC discussions.

Towards the future

Here we are not trying to draw a bleak future but are attempting to focus our attention to the realities that we have to face in the journey of Ecumenism. Much has been achieved through the Joint Council of MTC-CSI-CNI. There should be more understanding with the churches. These churches have to seek constantly the best signs of the growing together. However a model of unity which allows for the preservation and

17. See. Mar Thoma Syrian Church Directory, p. 111.

18. Thomas I. Best (ed), Living Today Towards visible unity, Faith and Order Paper No. 142, (1988), pp. 111-17.

growth of both East and West will be better for the churches in the Joint Council. The ill feeling resulted in the lack of agreement for a common name is to be healed. The joint council met in 1994 at Bangalore, hosted by MTC, resolved that Unity in mission is to be strengthened. The need of the hour is to use the existing church structure and thereby seek further unity among the churches so that the world may say 'they are one'.

Conclusion

In spite of the limitations, we have to realize that this unique model of Church union is a gift from God to the churches in India. It challenges us to a wider and deeper church union.

It also demands for inner commitment and a new spiritual renewal of the churches.

Let me conclude this discussion by quoting Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus, Bishop of the Mar Thoma Church and member of central and executive committees of the World Council of Churches. "Mar Thoma Church considers the Joint Council as a machinery, which by retaining their own identity can receive what is good in other churches and thereby grow together in unity. This is an opportunity to achieve unity through common witness. This unity is not an end in itself. We are responsible to move forward to fuller union as the spirit leads and guides us".¹⁹

Mar Thoma Church

Rev. George Mathew

19. Dr. Zacharias Mar Theophilus, The Relationship of MTC with CNI-CSI through Joint Council, in M. J. Joseph (ed), Search for Unity.....(Mal). Tiruvalla, (1982), pp. 78-79,

Orientale Lumen: An Evaluation from the Syriac Perspective

Introduction

Orientale Lumen, the Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II published on 2 May 1995, the liturgical memorial of St Athanasius (296-373), is to commemorate the centenary of Orientalium Dignitas of Pope Leo XIII. As the title signals, its main thesis is the theology of the East. This text with 28 sections (numbers) is well documented with 69 footnotes. The Letter lays down an immense array of Eastern Fathers like Gregory of Nyssa, John Damascene, Basil, John Chrysostom, Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, Clement of Alexandria, Ignatius of Antioch Evagrius of Pontus etc. Conspicuously absent from the letter are all the major Western Fathers save St Augustine. Except for Lumen Gentium and Dei Verbum all the supportive text from Vat II are from the Decree on Ecumenism and from the Decree on the Eastern Churches. The Greek Fathers of the Church and the Documents of Vat II are the two pillars upon which this Apostolic Letter is rooted in. The Letter makes an earnest appeal to all the Christians to get acquainted themselves with the characteristic traits of the Christian East. It invites the reader to comprehend the complementary aspects of the Christian traditions. These preliminary remarks will serve to highlight the oriental flavour of

this Apostolic Letter.

Content of the Letter

Of the two parts of Orientale Lumen, the first is titled 'Knowing the Christian East: An Experience of Faith'. It treats certain constitutive Eastern theological principles such as the notions of churches, monasticism, liturgy, trinity, communion, person etc. Part two is headlined 'From Knowledge to Encounter' which deals with the experiences of unity, a journeying together towards the Orientale Lumen. Here below we make an exposition of the central themes of the Letter from the Syriac perspective especially on the area of Christian origin and monasticism.

Introductory Section of the Letter (Numbers 1-5)

In the opening statement itself, the Pope connects the Light of the East to the rising sun (LK 1:78). He continues that this is Jesus Christ whom all christians invoke as the Redeemer of man.¹ It is the same light that motivated Pope Leo XIII to write Orientalium Dignitas to safeguard the significance of the Eastern traditions. The basic motif of this letter is announced at the beginning – to think in line with Pope Leo XIII in restoring the unity

1. Pope John Paul II, Orientale Lumen (Vatican City: 1995), 3. (Here after O. L.)

between all the christians.² The pope qualifies the traditions of the Eastern Churches as venerable and ancient. They are integral parts of the heritage of the universal church. The Pope invites the members of the Western tradition also to have a passionate longing for these traditions of the East.³ The unity of the church is declared as the basic motto in his apostolic writing – ‘to seek christian unity tirelessly wherever it was wounded’⁴

First Section: Knowing of the Christian East: An Experience of Faith (Nu. 5-17).

The Origin of Christianity

At the very outset itself the Pope candidly admits the different methods of theologizing. In the middle ages there was the misguided concept that there is only one normative theology, – the Latin theology. This concept changed since Vat II. The Pope vouches that the churches of the East are ‘living interpreters of the treasure of tradition they preserve’⁵. The Easterners have an original way of living their relationship with the Lord. The Christian East has a unique and privileged role

as the original setting where the church was born.⁶ Christianity too was born in the East, the cradle of world religions. As the original milieu, Christian East enjoys an envious, unique, privileged role. This is especially true with regard to the Syriac Orient which aspect is lamentably and conspicuously absent from the Letter.⁷

Though East is highly spoken of in the Letter, yet its theological perspectives are bi-polar—the Greek East and the Latin West while the Syriac Orient is simply overlooked. “The idea that the early Christian tradition was limited to its Greek and Latin expressions is still widespread. This assumption distorts historical reality and weakens greatly our understanding of the roots of Christian theology and spirituality. In the third and fourth centuries Syriac was the third international language of the Church. ...It was the vehicle of Christian missionary expansion in Persia, Armenia, Georgia, India and even Ethiopia”.⁸ This triangular approach (Syriac, Greek and Latin) is today widely accepted even by the Western scholars. Before Christianity developed in the Greek and Roman world and adapted their languages and imageries, it had a

2. O. L. 3.

3. O. L. 4

4. O. L. 6

5. O. L. 9

6. O. L. 10

7. Michel Van Parys also points out this aspect. “Par ailleurs, ce document reste marque par le dialogue entre la tradition byzantine et latine, et envisage de fait la marche vers l’unité comme les retrouvailles de l’unité existant au cours du premier millénaire de notre histoire. N’est-ce pas oublier les Eglises de tradition syriaque, alexandrine, arménienne?” Michel Van Parys, “Orientale Lumen: Une lettre apostolique sur les Eglises d’Orient”, Irenikon Tome LXVIII (1995), 211.

8. K. E. McVey, Ephrem the Syrian (New York: 1989), 1 (from the foreword of Meyendorff).

first period in which its environment was jewish and language Aramaic. This judaic Christianity had no future; and the traces of it had almost disappeared. But the forgotten works that had been preserved in Eastern languages, Armenian, Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic have helped to restore literary heritage⁹. The Christianity of the semitic build is to be further explored and studied. Three worlds went into the making of the Christian Church, three cultures, three visions, and expressions, of truth—the Jewish, Hellenistic and Latin. Each of them produced its own distinctive theology.¹⁰ We have to still rediscover this unknown face of the primitive Christianity. Any meaningful talk on Christianity must begin with its very origin and centres. This is an accepted methodology in ecclesiology among the academically qualified and linguistically skilled scholars. In the beginning of this century W. Bauer¹¹ insisted on the importance of stressing on a wide spectrum of local and regional churches around Edessa, Alexandria, Antioch, Asia, Rome for understanding how the churches of East and west developed. This is an approach basing on the triangular pattern. E. Sauer tried to reconstruct what Church life must have been like in the Christian communities of Jerusalem, Antioch, Seleucia Ctesiphon, Rome etc.¹²

The Syriac sector is known as the cradle of christianity. Christianity

was actually born in a semitic milieu and is an Aramaic speaking culture. Among the Oriental Churches those within the syriac tradition may be said to hold the pride of place, since they were representatives of and to a some degree direct heirs of the semitic world out of which christianity sprang.¹³ “In the formative period of historic christianity, no other group of churhes can prove a more dynamic and creative record of service to gospel and to human culture”.¹⁴ It is in the semitic world that we see the unhellinized and unlatinized form of the churches. The Syriac Churches were born and shaped outside the Greco-Roman sway. Had the Apostolic Letter incorporated some of the theological visions of Acts of Judas Thomas, Odes of Solomon, the writings of Aphraat (early IV cent.) and St. Ephrem (306–373), the Letter would have an added oriental flavour. These earliest literature express a characteristic theology of the semitic, biblical world out of which a Syriac view grew up. St. Ephrem's poetry holds a prestigious place as the vehicle of theology. “As the sole representative of a semitic Christianity which was for the most part unhellinized, uneuropianized, unwesterized, early syriac christianity takes on a new relevance in the modern world where the Churches of Asia, Africa, and S. America are rightly seeking to shake off the European cultural baggage from the Christianity which they have usually received through the intermediary of European and

9. J. Danielou, *Primitive Christian Symbols* (Baltimore: 1963), viii (intro.)
10. J. Danielou, *The Development of Christian Doctrine Before the Council of Nicaea Vol I : The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (London: 1964), 1.
11. W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (Tubingen: 1931).
12. Cf. E. Sauer, *Woher Kommt Kirche?* (Tubingen: 1978).
13. S. Brock, *The Luminous Eye : Placid Lectures Series* (Moovattupuzha: 1985), 132.
14. R. Murray, “The Characteristics of Eastern Syriac Christianity”, in N. C. Garsoian, et al (eds), *East of Byzantine: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period* (Washington: 1982), 14.

North American missionaries'.¹⁵ To avoid the constitutive role of Syriac tradition is unjustifiable.¹⁶

The Concept of Trinity (Nu 6)

Having said about the birth and spread of Christianity in the East and West, the Pope deals with the necessity of being in communion with the Holy Trinity. An eastern approach to the very mystery of Trinity itself is manifested in this Letter. "His or her goal is participation in the divine nature through communion with the mystery of the holy Trinity. In this view the Father's 'monarchy' is outlined as well as the concept of salvation according to the divine plan, as it is presented by Eastern theology..."¹⁷ In this statement the Pope has actually outlined the content of eastern trinitarian approach. The two dominant concerns of the trinitarian theology of the Cappadocian Fathers are the insistence on the monarchy of the Father and of the economy of salvation. Economy is the plan of God revealed in the history. The monarchy of the Father which the Easterners insist is not a monarchy that dominates but one that distributes.¹⁸ God is Being, and Being is communion. This communion is that of three persons. A real and personal communion.¹⁹ The vision of God of the Cappadocians is thoroughly economic. The Pope himself says that 'the eastern theology attributes a

very special role to the Holy Spirit'.²⁰ For Example, speaking about the Holy Spirit St. Basil says: "The Spirit is what the Spirit does. The Spirit is one who makes us holy, and deifies us, who restores the image of God in our souls, lifts up our hearts, holds the hand of infirm, brings us to perfection, gives us the knowledge of the future, understanding of the mysteries, apprehension of the hidden things, distribution of wonderful gifts, heavenly worship, endless joy in the presence of God, becoming like God, and becoming God".²¹ The Syriac theologians also expressed their view on the trinity very strongly. St. Ephrem compares the mystery of the trinitarian persons to the mystery of the sun, heat and light:

The light of the sun
is not subsequent to the sun
nor is there any time
when it was not;
the sun's light may be considered as
second
and its heat as third;
they are neither separate from it
or identical with it.²²

Liturgy as Participation in the Trinitarian Life

Having said the basis the Pope immediately enters into the practical aspect of theology which is also one of the basic tenets of Eastern theology.

- 15. S. Brock, *Syriac Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life* (Michigan: 1987), xi.
- 16. A. Halleux, "Autonomy and Centralization in the Ancient Syriac Churches: Edessa and Seleucia-Ctesiphon" *Wort und Wahrheit* 4 (1978), 60.
- 17. O.L., 16.
- 18. T. Parker, The Political Meaning of the Doctrine of the Trinity", *Journal of Religion* 60 (1980), 168.
- 19. For details Cf. J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (London: 1985).
- 20. O.L., 6.
- 21. St. Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto*, 9:23.
- 22. St. Ephrem, *Hymns on Faith* 40; S. Brock, *A Garland of Hymns From the Early Church* (Oxford: 1989).

'Participation in Trinitarian life takes place through the liturgy and in a special way through the Eucharist, the mystery of communion with the glorified body of Christ, the seed of immortality'.²³ The oriental liturgies are Gold mines.²⁴ All the Eastern liturgies have the same goal, that is, 'to initiate the faithful into the mystery of communion of the trinity. The post Vatican II theologians have amply clarified this idea'.²⁵ The contemporary Eastern Orthodox theologians are the typical advocates of the idea that liturgy is the best means of participation in the life of the triune God.²⁶ The liturgical Trinity is almost an axiom among the Eastern theologians.²⁷ This attitude reminds us of the ancient axiom law of prayer, law of belief (*Lex Orandi Lex Credendi*).²⁸ The Syriac liturgical texts are the best expressions of a living trinitarian theology. They are contemplations on the Trinity.²⁹

Divinization

The insistence on the notion of

the Trinitarian communion and the role of the Holy Spirit has naturally taken the Pope to the notion of divinization. Divinization is one of the best theological expressions of the Christian East. 'The teaching of the Cappadocian Fathers on divinization passed into the tradition of all the Eastern Churches and has become part of their common heritage... This theology of divinization remains one of the achievements particularly dear to Eastern Christian thought'.³⁰ Divinization is described as a process by which we become 'Christ-like'. The humanity is being transfigured by the grace of God.³¹

Aphophatism

Aphophatism is a characteristic note of the Eastern Christian theology. 'The Eastern Fathers always assert that it is impossible to know what God is; one can only know that he is, since he revealed himself in the history of salvation as Father,

- 23. O.L., 6.
- 24. A. Mikloshazy, *East Syriac Eucharistic Pneumatology* (Rome: 1968), 9.
- 25. C. M. Lacugna, "Can Liturgy Again Become the Source for Theology", *Studia Liturgica* 19(1989), 3-7; C. M. Lacugna and K. McDonnell, "Theses for a Contemporary Trinitarian Theology", *Scottish Journal of Theology* 41 (1988), 192 ff.
- 26. N. A. Nissiotis, "The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity for Church Life and Theology", in A. J. Philippou (ed), *The Orthodox Ethos* (Oxford: 1964); J. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (London: 1985).
- 27. For details cf. Patros Yousif, "An Introduction to the East Syrian Spirituality: Liturgical, Ecclesial and Theological Dimensions" in A. Thottakkara (ed) *East Syrian Spirituality* (Bangalore: 1990), 3-97.
- 28. Prosper of Aquitaine is supposed to be the author of this axiom. Cf. P. E. Fink (ed), *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship* (New York: 1990), 722.
- 29. For details, Cf. Joseph Kallarangatt, "A Trinitarian Epistemology in Theology", in G. Karukaparampil (ed), *Tuvaik: Studies in Honour of Rev. Jacob Vellian* (Kottayam: 1995), 147 ff.
- 30. O.L., 6.
- 31. For details of oriental theological expressions Cf. E. G. Farrugia, "Christianity as a Society of Mourners: Introducing Eastern Theology", in P. Pallath (ed), *Catholic Eastern Churches* (Rome: 1994).

Son and the Spirit'.³² This sense of the inexpressible divine reality is reflected in the liturgies of the East. All the traditions of the church affirm that we cannot know God. Apophysis means the negation of all definitions.³³ This darkness of unknowing is not agnosticism but a kind of knowing. 'Moses vision of God on mount Sinai (Ex. 20:24,34) is a favourite image used in Greek patristic theology to explain that the utter brilliance of God, the effulgence of God's glory can appear to us only as darkness'.³⁴ Apophysis thus, leads not into the absence but into the presence of God. Apophatism is knowing God in silence. "The more man grows in the knowledge of God, the more he perceives him as an inaccessible mystery, whose essence cannot be grasped... The Christians of the East turn to God as Father, Son and the Holy Spirit...But they perceive that one draws close to this presence above all by letting oneself be taught an adoring silence... This is reached through the prayerful assimilation of scripture and the liturgy more than by systematic meditation".³⁵

Tradition (Nu 8)

The Pope gives a theological analysis of the very concept of tradition. Its different shades of meaning can be enumerated as follows; 1) Tradition is the heritage of Christ's Church, 2) It includes the living memory of the Risen one, 3) It is being handed over by apostolic succession, 4) A tradition is articulated by the witness of the Apostle, martyrs, fathers and saints and the

living faith of all the Christians, 5) Tradition is not an unchanging repetition of formulas, but a heritage which preserves its original, living, kerygmatic core, 6) Tradition guarantees the church's certitude and continuity, 7) Tradition is a living reality that grows and develops. Tradition does not mean traditionalism. 8) This growth is guaranteed by the Holy Spirit, 9) Tradition is never pure nostalgia for things or forms past, nor regret for lost privileges, but the living memory of the Bride, kept eternally youthful by the love that dwells within her, 10) Tradition leads the churches to the eschatological expectation. There is the tension between the tradition and expectation. We are longing for the not yet.³⁶

Monasticism (Nu 9–13)

The topic which the Pope rather extensively deals with is monasticism. Monasticism seems to be the chunk of this Apostolic Letter. The Pope systematically brings out the prestigious traditions of the Greek theology and Egyptian monasticism. The main highlights of the notion of monasticism as it is envisaged in the Apostolic letter can be enumerated as follows: 1) Monasticism is the best expression of the spiritual traditions of the East, 2) The pope says that the eastern monasticism served as the source for the origin and development of monasticism in the West. "From the glorious times of the holy Fathers monastic spirituality flourished in the East which later flowed over into the western world,

32. O.L., 6.

33. For details of a Syriac theological method, Cf. T. Koonammakal, "Divine Names and Theological Language in Ephrem", in E. Livingstone (ed), *Studia Patristica*, Vol xxv, (Leuven: 1993), 318–23.

34. M. Lacugna, "The Trinitarian Mystery of God", in F. S. Fiorenza and J. P. Galvin (eds), *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1, (Minneapolis : 1984) 157.

35. O.L., 16.

36. O.L., 8.

and there provided a source from which Latin monastic life took its rise and has often drawn fresh vigour ever since".³⁷ 3) Monasticism is a model of baptismal life. 4) In the East, monasticism has retained great unity. The various expressions of monastic life—coenobitic (Pachomius or Basil), and eremitic (Antony or Macarius of Egypt) correspond different stages of spiritual journey.³⁸ 5) In the East monasticism was not conceived as a separate condition. It is not meant for a particular group of people. It was an ecclesial expression of all the baptized. It was presented as a symbolic synthesis of Christianity. 6) In monasticism the concretely lived charity is envisaged as the ideal of Christianity. "The monastery is a prophetic place where creation becomes praise of God and the precept of concretely lived charity becomes the ideal of human coexistence".³⁹ 7) The Pope also speaks in high esteem about the woman monasticism in the East. "The nun's charism, with its own specific characteristics, is a visible sign of that motherhood of God to which sacred Scripture often refers".⁴⁰ 8) monasticism can express the real identity of the Christian East. "Monasticism has always been the very soul of the Eastern churches: the first Christian monks were born in the East and the monastic life was an integral part of the Eastern Lumen passed on to the West by the great Fathers of the undivided Church".⁴¹

9) Monasticism is an ecclesial and community event. Even in its

eremitical form it is a personal response to an individual call. It is the Word of God who calls the monks. The Word is Christ to whom the monk is called to be conformed. Monasticism shows us how there is no true vocation that is not born of the church and for the church".⁴² 10) Poverty is an essential dimension of monastic life. 11) A monk's life is eucharist centred. "...the monk continues and brings to fulfillment in the liturgy the invocation of the Church, the Bride who implores the Bridegroom's return in a maranatha constantly repeated, not only in words but with the whole of his life".⁴³ 12) Monk is a contemplative and to the contemplative Christ reveals himself, and he sees the transformed face of the Risen Christ. 13) A monk's way is not generally marked by personal effort alone. He moves in the line showed to him by the spiritual father. God's fatherhood is manifested in him by the spiritual father. "Precisely because the spiritual father is the harmonizing link, monasticism has permitted the greatest variety of coenobitic and eremitical expressions. Monasticism in the East has thus been able to fulfil the expectations of each church in the various periods of its history".⁴⁴ 14) The monk is essentially a man of communion and a man of prayer. 15) Among the monks the law of love has superiority to any other law. 16) The communion is revealed first and foremost in service to one's brothers in monastic life and also to the church. 17) Monasticism in the Christian antiquity has been the privileged means

37. O.L., 7.

38. O.L., 9.

39. O.L., 9.

40. O. L., 9.

41. O. L., 9.

42. O. L., 14.

43. O. L., 10.

44. O. L., 13.

for the evangelization of peoples.
 18) Monk's life is the supreme example of the unity that exists in the East between spirituality and theology.⁴⁵ He knows that the Lord alone is the truth, the life and the way. Monk is a person in relationship. He acquires the knowledge of God as well as the participation in the trinitarian communion. 19) This mystery is continuously veiled, enveloped in silence.⁴⁶ In the East an intrinsic link exists between liturgical prayer, spiritual tradition, and monastic life.⁴⁷ The Pope speaks so much about monasticism "with the purpose of inviting Western monasticism to dialogue with the East in the conviction that thereby unity of mind and heart will be fostered at the deepest level, that of prayer and contemplation".⁴⁸

This section of the Letter is the richest theologically. It is true that there is a very radical and fundamental relation between the Syrian and Greek monasticism. The Pope has really substantiated the fundamentals of monasticism; but here also the originality and specific contribution of the Syriac Orient is downplayed. Monasticism was a spontaneous expression of the Church. For the syriac churches it was a way of life. The impact of primitive Syrian asceticism upon the development of Christianity in the lands of Euphrates and Tigris was both incisive and deep "As against Coptic and Greek monasticism in Egypt and Greek monasticism in Palestine and Asia Minor, Syrian

monasticism is conspicuous as a definitely independent phenomenon."⁴⁹ The Syriac Churches are monastic Churches.⁵⁰ The first syrian hermits drew the principle of eremitic beliefs and inspiration for their eremitic vocation from the genuine teaching of the syriac Church. There is no isolated syrian ascetic spirituality independent of the Church.⁵¹ Syrian monasticism has lost its specific character when it came to be fused with the Egyptian and Greek monasticism. With the fusing in the fifth and the following centuries of the native syrian proto-monastic tradition with that of Egyptian monasticism and the spirituality of the desert, and with the increasing prestige, among syriac writers, of Greek monastic literature, the character of syriac spirituality was bound to change. What we find in the writers of fifth century onwards is an intermingling, in varying proportions, of the various traditions, upon which each individual author happened to draw.⁵²

"Syrian asceticism has an indigenous character. Now if one look at some of the sources which purport to deal with the fourth century Syrian ascetics, one is in fact giving an impression that Egypt was the ultimate source of inspiration for the ideal of the ascetic—very often, of course, synonymous with monastic life. Thus, for example, according to a large number of Syriac sources monasticism was introduced into Syria and Mesopotamia by the disciples of

45 O. L., 15.

46 O. L., 16.

47 O. L., 27.

48 Jose De Cuyper, "A Summary of Orientale Lumen", Petrus Oct. (1995), 3.

49 A. Voobus, History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient. A Contribution to the History of Culture in the Near East (CSCO vol 184) (Louvain: 1958), iv.

50 E. R. Hambye, Dimensions of Eastern Christianity (Kottayam: 1983), 59.

51 S. Abouzayd, Ihidayutha: A Study of Singleness in the Syrian Orient (Oxford: 1993), v.

52. S. Brock, Syriac Fathers on Prayer, xxxiii

Pachomius... In point of fact, the fourth and fifth century ascetics of Syria...were heirs to a remarkable native ascetic tradition that went back to the very beginnings of Christianity".⁵³ At any rate ascetical ideals were very old among the Aramaic Christians. Their earliest forms were independent from the influence of other Christian centres.⁵⁴ Again, "Basilian norms penetrated into Syria and Palestine, but there they encountered... a much more rigid ascetics, which seems to have tolerated nothing of the conventional way of life... and tended towards a primitive life".⁵⁵ Monastic and ascetic trends found a fertile soil in the Syriac speaking area.⁵⁶ "...Primitive Christianity in the Syrian Orient was not of the ordinary shape as we know it in the development in the Hellenistic realm. In fact, asceticism has stood at its cradle. This factor in turn has impressed very peculiar features into its spiritual face".⁵⁷

The Acts of Thomas is ever a bit Syriac production where ascetic life is narrated as an essential step on the road to salvation.⁵⁸ Writings of Aphraat represents Syriac Christianity in the purest form. He knows of monks. His monks are ascetics living either individually or in small groups. We know the purest form of Christianity also from St Ephrem at least as far

as his Nisibian period is concerned. During the Edessan period probably he might have come into contact with the representatives of the Egyptian monasticism.⁵⁹ The ascetics of the Syrian desert are one of the most attractive areas of Ephrem's writings.

Syrian monasticism had its origin in the ascetical movement of the covenanters – sons of the covenant or daughters of the covenant. These ascetics follow a vowed life of perpetual virginity and simplicity.⁶⁰ One of the most important texts on Syrian – proto-monasticism is Aphrahat's sixth Demonstration, entitled 'On the bnay qyama, 'members (sons) of the covenant'.⁶¹ It is true that from the fifth century onwards a vast number Greek literature has been translated into Syriac. "These included much of the extensive literature of the early Egyptian monasticism, such as the Life of Antony, Palladiu's Lausiac History, the Historia Monarchorum and various collections of Apophthegmata".⁶² The famous Evagrius of Pontus about whom the Pope has mentioned is also accepted by the later Syriac monastic authors as a great spiritual writer. Abraham of Nathpar, Abraham of Kashkar and Jacob of Edessa are later monastic writers of the Church of the East. "These monastic writers of the Church of the East draw both

53. S. Brock, *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity* (London: 1984), 3.

54. Hambye, *Dimensions of Eastern Christianity*, 59.

55. J. Grebomont, "Monasticism" in *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, Vol I, (Cambridge : 1992) 567.

56. H. J. W. Drijvers, *East of Antioch. Studies in East Syriac Christianity* (London: 1984), 18.

57. A. Voobus, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient*, 14.

58. A. F. Klijn (ed) *The Acts of Thomas* (Leiden: 1964), Acts 107, Page 38.

59. *Acts of Thomas* 9, 11

60. Details Cf. S. Brock, *The Luminous Eye*, 111 ff.

61. P. Schaff and H. Wace, (eds) *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, vol XIII, section on Aphrhat, *Demonstrations VI*, 362 ff.

62. S. Brock, *The Syriac Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life* (Michigan: 1987), xvii.

on earlier Syriac writers (notably John of Apamea) and on the Greek monastic literature that had been translated into Syriac in the course of the fifth and sixth centuries: Evagrius, the Macarian Homilies, the Asceticon of Abba Isaiah, the Dionysian, Mark the Hermit, and Nilus seem to have been influential for them".⁶³ The most famous monastic writer of the Church of the East is Isaac of Nineveh. Then Dadisho, Joseph the visionary, John of Dalyatha, John the Elder are also illustrious sons of the Church of the East.⁶⁴ According to the Syriac tradition monasticism is not only the centre around which spirituality and Christian life are built up but it is the main stem from whence they branch out. There is no area of spiritual culture that has escaped the influence of Syrian monasticism.⁶⁵ "Although Syriac Christianity had developed its own particular type of ascetic life as a form of proto-monasticism, from the fourth century onwards this rapidly came to be overshadowed by the prestige of Egyptian monasticism".⁶⁶

Monasticism is not an exclusively Christian phenomenon. Many centuries before Christ, we see monks especially in the East. From the third century onwards we see the growth of monasticism as a natural phenomenon in the Church. Mesopotamia and Syria were cradles of the fertile soil for monasticism. Monasticism and asceticism were fundamental features

of the Syriac spirituality. The Syriac monastic life was an ecclesial expression of the authentic syriac Church and its spirituality.⁶⁷

The Second Part : From Knowledge to Encounter (Numbers 17–28)

From the very beginning of the second part the Pope expresses his earnest desire for a profound unity between the different Christian denominations. He recollects the visits he has received from the various heads of the churches.⁶⁸ He desires to go beyond the degree of communion we have reached. The Pope expresses his mind of going back to the earliest days of Christianity to understand the original character of the ecclesial communion. "Despite difficulties and differences, the letters of the Apostles (2 Cor 9:11–14) and of the Fathers (Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp) show very close, fraternal links between the churches in a full communion of faith with respect for their specific features and identity".⁶⁹ This feeling of unity is strengthened by meditation of the acts of the martyrs of every church and sharing in the doctrine of the so many teachers of faith. The development of the different experiences of the ecclesial life was quite welcome. The coming together at Eucharist was the source of spirituality, moral life and the very structure of the church itself. The ministries and services were under the leadership of the bishop,

63. The Syriac Fathers..., xviii–xix.

64. For details of Syriac monasticism, Arthur Voobus, History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient (Louvain: 1956 and 1960) two Volumes.

65. A Voobus, History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient, v–vi.

66. S. Brock, "Syrian Tradition", in C. Jones (et al) The Study of Spirituality (London: 1986), 207.

67. Shafiq AbouZayd. Ihidayutha: A Study of the Life of Singleness in the Syrian Orient : From Ignatius of Antioch to Chalcedon 451 Ad. (Oxford : 1993), v.

68. O.L., 17

69. O.L., 18

the successor of the apostles. "The first councils are an eloquent witness to this enduring unity in diversity.

The breach of communion and estrangement that happened in the one church of God in the first millennium is not seriously taken into consideration here. An overemphasis is given to the Byzantine factor. "Although in the first centuries of the Christian era conflicts were already slowly starting to emerge within the body of the Church, we cannot forget that unity between Rome and Constantinople endured for the whole of the first millennium, despite difficulties"⁷⁰ Pope admits that it was a progressive estrangement and the other's diversity was not fully appreciated. He is longing for the unity of the Church by saying that the deepest nature of the church demands it.

The experience of unity. The Pope recollects all the events that have been created in the catholic church since the publication of Orientalium Dignitas, to promote the specific features of the eastern heritage. He makes reference to Peter in his duty to confirm his brothers in faith and unity (Lk 22:32). Peter intends to place himself at the service of a Church united in charity.⁷¹ "Peter's task is to search constantly for ways that will help preserve unity. Therefore he must not create obstacles but must open up paths"⁷² Then he enunciates the plan for unity: "Today we know that unity can be achieved through the love of God only if the churches want it together, in full respect for the traditions of each and for necessary autonomy. We know that this can

take place only on the basis of the love of churches which feel increasingly called to manifest the one Church of Christ, born from one Baptism, and from one Eucharist, and which want to be sisters".⁷³ Quoting the Second Vatican Council the Pope energetically speaks about the responsibility of the easterners themselves to maintain the autonomy and integrity of the churches in full communion with the see of Rome. Improving our knowledge of one another is suggested as the best means for ecclesial unity.

Journeying Together Towards the Oriental Lumen

Every day in the East the sun of hope rises again, the light that restores life to the human race. It is from the East, according to a lovely image, that our Saviour will come again (Mt 24:27). The Pope categorically concludes that Christ is the Oriental Lumen.⁷⁴

Conclusion

Oriental Lumen is an Apostolic Letter with certain theological perspectives. First of all it engages the Latin Church to improve her knowledge of the Christian East. It is at the same time an invitation to the Easterners to get into the very ethos of the Oriental traditions. This Letter envisages a theology of sister Churches – a theology that respects the apostolic, liturgical, spiritual and canonical traditions of the different Churches. Oriental Lumen is another landmark towards the journey to the full communion.

Dr. Joseph Kallarangatt

70. O.L., 18.

71. O.L., 20.

72. O.L., 20.

73. O.L., 20.

74. O.L., 28.

The Catholic Churches of Oriental Tradition

I. Alexandrian Tradition

		1. Coptic Church		2. Ethiopian (Ghe'ez) Church		II. Antiochene Tradition	
P	Alexandria	+ Stephanos II (Ghattas)* 1920	Cairo	Addis Ababa	Ethiopia	Lebanon	
Ep	Assiut	+ Kyrillos (William)* 1946	Assiut	Adigrat	Egypt	Beirut	
Ep	Ismailia	+ Joannes (Zakaria)* 1949	Ismailia	Asmara	Egypt	Lebanon	
Ep	Luqṣor	+ Aghnatiros (Yaacoub)* 1923	Luqṣor		Egypt		
Ep	Minya	+ Antonios (Naguib)* 1935	Minya		Egypt		
Ep	Sohag	+ Morkos (Hakim)* 1930	Sohag		Egypt		
Other hierarchs							
+ Youhanna (Golta)* 1973, tit. B of Andropolis, patriarchal auxiliary							
+ Andraos (Salama)* 1931, tit. B of Barca, patriarchal auxiliary							
+ Youhanna (Nueir)* 1914, eparch emeritus of Assiut							
M	Addis Ababa	+ Paulos (card. Tzadua)* 1921	Ababa				
Ep	Adigrat	+ Kidane-Mariam (Teklechaimanot)* 1933	Adigrat				
Ep	Asmara	+ Zekarias (Yohannes)* 1925	Asmara				
Other hierarch							
+ Francois Abraha, B emeritus of Asmara							
P	Antioch					Beirut	
PEx	Lebanon					Lebanon	
		+ Ignatios Antoon II (Hayek)* 1910					
							23000

83000
33550
5000
21362
35000
12476
190381 *

Other hierarchs

+ Youhanna (Golta)* 1973, tit. B of Andropolis, patriarchal auxiliary
+ Andraos (Salama)* 1931, tit. B of Barca, patriarchal auxiliary
+ Youhanna (Nueir)* 1914, eparch emeritus of Assiut

48200
17500
72081
137781 *

The Catholic Churches of Oriental Tradition

PEx	Jerusalem	Corepiscopus Butros Abdel Ahad	Jerusalem	Israel
PEx	Turkey	Corepiscopus Yusuf Sag	Amman	Jordan
PEx	Iraq and Kuwait	+ Athanasios Matti Shaba (Matoka) * 1930	Istanbul	Turkey
AEP	Baghdad	+ Kurillos Emmanuel (Benni) * 1921	Bassorah	Iraq
AEP	Mosul	+ Eustathios Youssef (Mounaver) * 1925	Baghdad	Iraq
M	Damascus	+ Rabula Antoon (Beylouni) * 1930	Mossul	Iraq
AEP	Aleppo	+ Ja'qob George Habib (Hafouri) * 1916	Damascus	Syria
AEP	Hasakeh-Nisibis	+ Basilius Nassua (Daoud) * 1930	Azizieh	Syria
Ep	Cairo	+ Lawrence Ephraem (Thottam) * 1928	(Aleppo)	Syria
		+ Maronite Philoxinos (Ayyankulangara) * 1928, tit. M. of Chayal	Hassakeh	Egypt
		+ Paulos Philoxinos (Ayyankulangara) * 1928, tit. B of Barcusus	Cairo	

Other hierarchs

+ Julios Mikhail (Al-Jamil) * 1938, tit. AB of Takrit patriarchal auxiliary
+ Clemens George (Schelhot) * 1920, tit. AB of Hierapolis in Syria, formerly M. of Damascus

2. Syro-Malankara Church

M	Trivandrum	+ Benedict Gregorios (Thangalathil) * 1916	Trivandrum	India
Ep	Thiruvalla	+ Geevarghese Timotheos (Chundevale) * 1928	Thiruvalla	India
Ep	Battery	+ Cyril Baselios (Matancharivu) * 1935	Sultan's Battery	India
		+ Nasrallah Butros (Stein) * 1920		

Other hierarchs

+ Paulos Philoxinos (Ayyankulangara) * 1928, tit. M. of Chayal
+ Lawrence Ephraem (Thottam) * 1928, tit. B of Barcusus

3. Maronite Church

P	Antioch	+ Nasrallah Butros (Stein) * 1920	Bkerké	Lebanon
PEx	Jerusalem	Corepiscopus Augustin Harrouche	Jerusalem	365.
AEP	Antelias	+ Youssef Mohsen (Bechara) * 1935	Antelias	Lebanon
AEP	Beirut	+ Khalil (Abinader) * 1921	Beirut	191000
AEP	Tripoli	+ Gabriel (Soubia) * 1930	Tripoli	640000
AEP	Tyrus	+ Maroon (Sader) * 1926	Tyrus	98542
Ep	Baalbek - Deir El-Ahmar	+ Philippos (Chebaya) * 1920	Deir El-Ahmar	250000
		+ Deir El-Ahmar		300000

Ep	Batrun and Sarba	+ The patriarch		240000
Ep	Jbeil	+ Béchara (Raï) * 1940	Lebanon	300000
Ep	Jounieh	+ Choueirallah (Harb) * 1923	Lebanon	185475
Ep	Saida	+ Ibrahim (Hélou) * 1925	Lebanon	96000
Ep	Zahleh	+ George (Scandar) * 1927	Lebanon	48000
AEP	Cyprus	+ Butros (Gemayel) * 1932	Cyprus	10500
EP	Cairo	+ Yussef (Dergham) * 1930	Egypt	5800
AEP	Aleppe	+ Butros (Callaos) * 1922	Syria	3650
AEP	Damascus	+ Antoon Hamid (Moorany) * 1930	Syria	8000
Ep	Lattaqiya	+ Antoon (Torbey) * 1925	Syria	24500
Ep	St. Charbel of Buenos Aires	+ Charbel (Merhi) * 1937	Buenos Aires	700000
Ep	O. L. of Lebanon in São Paulo	+ Yussef (Mahfouz) * 1932	Sao Paulo	426000
Ep	St. Maron of Brooklyn (Western Eparchy, 1994)	+ Francis Mansour (Zayek) * 1920	Brooklyn, NY	53718
Ep	St. Maron of Sydney	+ John George (Chedid) * 1923	Los Angeles, CA	
Ep	St. Maron of Montreal	+ Yussef (Hitti) * 1925	Strathfield, NSW	150000
		+ Georges (Abi-Nader) * 1923	Montreal	80000
				3316550 *
Other hierarchs				
+ Antun Butros (Card. B Khoraiche) * 1907, Patriarch emeritus				
+ Bulos Emilio (Saadé) * 1993, tit. B. of Apamea, Patriarchal Vicar for Batrun and Zghorta region				
+ Guy Bulos (Nujeim) * 1935, tit. B. of Caesarea Philippi, Patriarchal Vicar for Sarba				
+ Francis Nehmeh (Baissari) * 1933, tit. B. of Aradus, Patriarchal Vicar for Jubbéh				
+ Roland (Abujawdeh) * 1930, tit. B. of Arca in Phoenicia, patriarchal auxiliary and Vicar General				
+ Youssef (Matar) * 1941, tit. B. of Tarsus, patriarchal auxiliary and vicar general				
+ Youssef (Khoury) * 1936, tit. B. of Chonochora, Ap. Visitator for Maronites living in Western and Northern Europe				

+ Emilio (Eid) * 1925, tit. B. of Sarepta, former Vice-President of the Pont. Commission for the revision of the Code of Oriental Canon Law, Patriarchal Procurator in Rome
 + Edmond (Farhat) *, tit. AB of Biblus, Ap. Pronuncio in Algeria and Tunisia, Ap. Delegate in Lybia
 + Bulos Fuad (Tabet) *, tit. AB of Sinna, Ap. Nuncio, Permanent Observer at the United Nations institutions in Geneva

+ Aghnatiros (Ziadeh) * 1906, AB emeritus of Beirut
 + Elias (Farah) * 1909, AB emeritus of Cyprus
 + Aghnatiros Abdo (Khalifé) * 1925, AB, B emeritus of Saint Marony of Sydney

III. Armenian Tradition

	Armenian Church		
P PEx PEx M	Cilicia Damascus Jerusalem Beirut	+ Hovhannes Bedros XVIII (Kasparian) * 1927 Mited Archpriest George Tayroyan Archpriest Joseph Rubian + The Catholicos-Patriarch of Cilicia	Damascus Syria Lebanon Iran Iraq
Ep	Ispahan	+ Varian (Tekeyan) * 1921	Beirut Teheran Baghdad
AEP	Baghdad	+ Paul (Coussa) * 1917	Cairo
Ep	Alexandria	+ Butros (Taza) * 1940	Aleppo
AEP	Aleppo	+ Butros (Marayati) * 1948	Kamichlieh
EP	Kamichlieh	+ Butros of Aleppo, Ap. Adm.	Istanbul
AEP	Istanbul	+ Hovhannes (Tcholokian) * 1919	Ukraine
AEP	L'viv	+ [vacant]	L'viv
Ep	Holy Cross of Paris	+ Krikor (Gabroyan) * 1934	Paris
Ep	St. Gregory of Narek at Buenos Aires	+ Vartan Waldir (Boghossian) * 1940	Buenos Aires
ApEx	U.S.A. and Canada	+ Mikail Nerses (Sétian), Ap. Adm. tit. B of Ancyra	USA
Ord	Greece	Mited Archpriest Nishan Karakéhyan, Apostolic Visitator for Armenians living in central-southern Europe	Athens
Ord	Romania	+ György Miklós (Jákubiny) * 1946 tit. B of Aquae regiae, Ap. Adm.	Gherla
			Romania
			38000
			650
			1600
			4000

Ord	Eastern Europe	+ Nerses (Der Nersessian) * 1920	tit. B of	Ashtotz	Armenia	John Madey
ApEx	Latin America	+ Vartan of St. Gregory of Narek	Buenos Aires	Argentina	30000	
					14000	
					177820 *	
Other hierarchs						
	Hemayagh Bedros XVII (Ghedikian), Catholicos-Patriarch emeritus					
	Andrew Bedogluyan * tit. B of Comana, patriarchal auxiliary and vicar general					
	+ Vartan (Achkarian) *, tit. B of Tokat					
	+ Raphael (Bayan) * 1914, B emeritus of Alexandria					
	+ Krikor Ayvazian * 1912, tit. B of Marasc, former Eparch of Kamichlieh					

Hemayagh Bedros XVII (Ghedikian), Catholicos-Patriarch emeritus
 Andrew Bedogluyan * tit. B of Comana, patriarchal auxiliary and vicar general
 + Vartan (Achkarian) *, tit. B of Tokat
 + Raphael (Bayan) * 1914, B emeritus of Alexandria
 + Krikor Ayvazian * 1912, tit. B of Marasc, former Eparch of Kamichlieh

IV. Syro-oriental Tradition

1. »Chaldean« Church of the East

P	Babylonia	+ Raphael I (Bidawid) * 1922				
PEx	Jerusalem	Corepiscopus Paul Collin				
M	Baghdad	+ The Catholic-Patriarch				
M	Kerkuk	+ Andraos (Sana)				
AEP	Arbil	+ Stephanos (Babaca)				
AEP	Bassorah	+ Yousif (Thomas)				
AEP	Mossul	+ Giwargis (Garmo)				
M	Teheran	+ Yuhannan Semaan (Issayi)				
M	Urmia	+ Thomas (Meram)				
AEP	Ahwaz	+ Hanna (Zora)				
EP	Salmas	+ Thomas of Urmia				
EP	Beirut	Corepiscopus Louis Al-Dairamy, patr. adm. Beirut				
EP	Cairo	+ Youssef Ibrahim (Sarraf)				
EP	Aleppo	+ Antonios (Audio)				
AEP	Diyarbakir	+ Paulos (Karatas)				
EP	St. Thomas the Apostle of Detroit	+ Ibrahim Namo (Ibrahim)				
			Cairo	Egypt		
			Aleppo	Syria		
			Istanbul	Turkey		
			Southfield, MI	USA		
					500	
					15000	
					3300	
					60000	

Other hierarchs

+ Emmanuel-Karim (Delly), tit. AB of Kashkar, patriarchal auxiliary
 + Gabriel (Batta), AB emeritus of Diyarbakir.

2. Syro-»Malabar« Church

AM	Ernakulam-	+ Antony (card. Padiyara) * 1921,	Metropolitan	352000
M	Angamaly	+ Joseph (Powathil) * 1930	India	158337
Ep	Changanacherry	+ Joseph (Punnakottil) * 1930	India	328456
Ep	Kanjirapally	+ Mathew (Vattakuzhy) * 1930	India	133285
Ep	Palai	+ Joseph (Pallikaparampil) * 1927	India	400836
Ep	Kottayam	+ Kuriakos (Kunnacherry) * 1928	India	
Ep	Ernakulam-	+ The Major Archbishop	India	
M	Angamaly	+ James (Pazhayattil) * 1934	India	234685
Ep	Irinjalakuda	+ George (Punnakottil) * 1936	India	350460
Ep	Kothamangalam	+ Jacob (Toomkuzhy) * 1930	India	153131
Ep	Mananthavady	+ Joseph (Irimpen) * 1919	India	55711
Ep	Palghat	+ George (Valiamattam) * 1938	India	260385
Ep	Tellicherry	+ Sebastian (Mankuzhikary) * 1929	India	110543
Ep	Thamarasserry	+ Joseph (Kundukulam) * 1917	India	409441
Ep	Trichur	+ Gratian (Mundadan) * 1933	India	957
Ep	Bijnor	+ Vijay Anand (Nedumpuram) * 1938	India	23550
Ep	Chanda	+ Dominic (Kokkat) * 1932	India	1617
Ep	Gorakhpur	+ Simon Stock (Palthara) * 1935	India	3651
Ep	Jagdalpur	+ Paul (Chittilapilly) * 1934	India	100000
Ep	Kalyan	+ Gregory (Karotempred) * 1933	India	8300
Ep	Rajkot	+ Joseph Pastor (Neelakkavil) * 1930	India	3350
Ep	Sagar	+ Abraham (Mattam) * 1922	India	2146
Ep	Satna	+ John (Perumattam) * 1921	India	2269
Ep	Ujjain	+ Ujjain, M. P.	India	3093104*

Other hierarchs

+ Jacob (Mananathodath)*, tit. B. of Abydus, auxiliary to the metropolitan of Ernakulam-Angamaly

+ Sebastian, (Yallopilly), B emeritus of Tellicherry

V. Constantinopolitan or Byzantine Tradition

	1. Albanian Church	Albania	800 *
ApAdm	Southern Albania + Ivan Dias tit. AB of Rusubisir, Ap. Adm., Ap. Nuncio	Tirana	
	2. Belorussian Church		
Belorussia	[not yet restored]		
	3. Byzantine Church of Krizevci	Croatia	
Ep	Krisevci + Slavomir (Miklovs) * 1934	Zagreb	
	Other hierarchs		
	+ Joakim (Ilerbul) * 1928, B of Skopje-Prizren, Ap. Visitator for the faithful in Macedonia		
	4. Bulgarian Church	Bulgaria	
ApEx	Sofia + Metodi (Dimitrov Stratlev) * 1916, tit. AB of Diocletianopolis	Sofia	
	Other hierarchs		
	+ Christo (Proykov) * 1946, tit. B of Briula, auxiliary to the Ap. Exarch		
	5. Greek (Hellenic) Church		
ApEx	Greece + Amarghyros (Printesis) * 1937, tit. B of Gratianopolis	Athen	Greece 2300 *
ApEx	Constantinople Archimandrite Thomas (Varsamis)	Istanbul	Turkey 50
			2350 *
	6. Greek-Melkite Church		
P	Antioch + Maximos V (Hakim), Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, of Alexandria and of Jerusalem * 1908*		
PEX	+ Bulos (Antaki) * 1927, tit. AB of Nubia Cairo	Egypt	7500
PEX	+ Lutfi (Laham) * 1933, tit. AB of Tarsus Jerusalem	Israel	3000
PEX	Archimandrite Nikolaos (Dagher) Baghdad	Iraq	340
PEX	Archimandrite Basilios (Kanakry) Salamieh	Kuwait	4500
M	+ Neophytos (Edelby) * 1920 Aleppo	Syria	13000

The Catholic Churches of Oriental Tradition

M	Bosra and Hauran	+ Bulos (Nassif Borkhoche) * 1932	Khabab	Syria	27000
M	Damascus	+ The Patriarch + Abraham (Nehmeh) * 1927	Damascus Homs & Yabrud	Syria Syria	92000 25000
M	Homs, Hama and Yabrud	+ Mikhaïl (Yatim) * 1920 + Habib (Bacha) * 1831	Lattaqiyah Beirut	Syria Lebanon	6500 150000
AEP	Lattaqiyah Beirut and Jbeil	+ Yuhanna (Assad Haddad) * 1626 + Kyrillos (Salim Bustros) * 1939 + Antoon (Hayek) * 1928 + Georges (Kwaiter) * 1928 + Elias (Nijmeh) * 1920 + Andraos (Haddad) * 1930	Tyros Baalbek Jdeidet Marjeyou Saida Tripoli Zahleb	Lebanon Lebanon Lebanon Lebanon Lebanon 	8195 23000 12000 17000 6000 127000
M	Tyros Baabek Banyas Saïda Tripoli Zahleh and AEP	+ George (El- Murr) * 1930 + Maximos (Salloum) * 1923 + Butros (Moualllem) * 1928	Amman Haifa Sao Paulo	Jordan Israel Brasil	18288 43000 381000
AEP	Petra and Philadelphia Nazareth, Akka and Galilee	+ John (Adel Elya) * 1928 + Michel (Hakim) * 1921 + George (Riashi) * 1933 + Butros (Raï) * 1922	Newton, MA Outremont, Qué. Darlington, NSW Mexico, D. F.	USA Canada Australia Mexico	27000 40000 40000 2400
Ep	O. L. of the Paradise in São Paulo	+ St. St. Newton Saviour's of Montreal St. Michael's of Sydney	Mexico	Caracas Venezuela	45000 1118723 *
ApEx	Venezuela	+ Butros of O. L. of the Paradise in Mexico			

Other hierarchs

+ Francois (Abou-Mokh) * 1923, tit. AB of Palmyra, Patriarchal Vicar for Damascus
 + Isidore (Battikha) * 1950, tit. AB of Pelusium, Patriarchal Vicar for Damascus

+ Yuhanna (Mansoor) * 1928, tit. AB of Apamea, Patriarchal auxiliary
+ Hilarion (Capucci) * 1922, tit. AB of Caesarea in Palestine, [tit.] patriarchal exarch in Jerusalem
+ Elias (Zoghby) * 1912, AB emeritus of Baalbek
+ Nikolaos (Hajj) * 1907, AB emeritus of Banias
† Yussef (Elias Tawil) * 1913, AB, B emeritus of Newton
Nicholas (James Samra) * 1944, tit. B of Gerasa, auxiliary of Newton
Spiridon (Mattar) * 1921, B emeritus of O.L. of the Paradise in Sao Paulo
+ Gregorios (Haddad) * 1924, tit. AB of Adana, former M of Beirut
+ Joseph (Rava) * 1917, tit. M of Scythopolis, former AB of Nazareth, Akka and All Galilee
+ Aghnatiros (Raad) * 1923, AB emeritus of Saiad
+ Saba (Youakim) * 1914, AB emeritus of Petra and Philadelphia

7. Italo-Albanian Church

Ep	Lungro	+ Ercole (Lupinacci) * 1933	Lungro	Italy
Ep	Piana degli Albanesi	+ Sotir (Ferrara) * 1937	Piana degli Albanesi	Italy
Abbey S. Maria di Grottaferrata		+ Archimandrite Paolo (Giannini)	Grottaferrata	Italy
				97
				63597*

8. Romanian Church

M	Fagaras and Alba Julia	+ Alexandru (card. Todea) * 1912	Blaia	Romania
		+ George of Cluj, Ap. Adm. »sede plenaria«		495000
Ep	Cluj-Gherla	+ Gheorge (Gutiu) * 1924	Cluj-Napoca	Romania
Ep	Lugoj	+ Ioan (Ploscaru) * 1911	Lugoj	Romania
Ep	Maranures	+ Lucian (Muresan) * 1931	Bala Mare	Romania
Ep	Oradea Mare	+ Vasile (Hossu) * 1919	Oradea	Romania
Ep	St. George's in Canton	+ John Michael Botean, Ap. Adm.	Canton, OH	USA
				5250

Other hierarchs

+ Vasile (Louis Puscas) * 1915, B emeritus of St. George's in Canton
+ Vasile (Cristea) * 1906, former Ap. Visitator for Romanians in Europe (Rome)

1721035 *

9. Ruthenian Church

Ep	Mukacevo	+ Ivan (Semedi) * 1921	Ukraine
M	Pittsburgh	+ [vacant]	USA
Ep	Parma	+ Andrew (Pataki) 1927	USA
Ep	Passaic	+ Michael (Joseph Dundick) * 1916	USA
Ep	Van Nuys	- George (Martin Kuzma) * 1925	USA

Other hierarchs

+ Stephen (John Kocisko) * 1915, M emeritus of Pittsburgh
 + Ivan (Marghitych) * 1921, tit. B of Scopelus, auxiliary of Mukacevo
 + Josyf (Holovach) * 1924, tit. B. of Sozopolis, auxiliary of Mukacevo
 + John (Michael Bilock) * 1916, B of Pergamum

10. Russian Church

ApEx	Russia	[vacant]	
ApEx	China	[vacant]	

Other hierarchs

+ Andrei (Katkoff) * 1916, tit. B of Nauplia

11. Slavak Church

Ep	Presov	+ Ján (Hirká) * 1923	Slovakia
Ep	Sls. Cyril and	+ Michael (Rusnak) 1921	Canada
Ep	Methodius of		
	Toronto		

Other hierarchs

+ Milan (Chautur) * 1957, tit. B of Cresima, auxiliary of Presov

12. Ukrainian Church

AM	L'viv	+ Myroslav (Ivan Lubachivsky) * 1914	Ukraine
M	L'viv, Halych	+ The Major Archbishop	
	and Kamianetsk		
Ep	Ivano-Frankivsk	+ Sofron (Dmyterko) * 1917	Ukraine
Ep	Kolomyia	+ Pavlo (Vasylyk) * 1926	Ukraine
	Chernivci		

	Ep	Sambir- Drohobych	+ [vacant]	Drohobych	Ukraine	546892
190	Ep	Ternopil	+ Mykhajlo (Sabryha)* 1940	Ternopil	Ukraine	594340
	Ep	Zboriv	+ Mykhajlo (Koitum) * 1949	Zboriv	Ukraine	414279
	Ep	Przemysl and Sanok	+ Ivan (Martyniak) * 1939	Przemysl	Poland	547000
M		Philadelphia	+ Stehen (Sulyk) * 1924	Philadelphia, PA	USA	77886
	Ep	St. Josaphat in Parma	+ Robert (Mikhail Moskalik) * 1937	Parma, OH	USA	11823
	Ep	St. Nicholas of Chicago	+ Michael (Wiwchar) * 1932	Chicago, IL	USA	17946
	Ep	Stamford	- Basil (Harry Losten) * 1930	Stamford, CT	USA	36089
	M	Winnipeg	- Michael (Bzdel) * 1930	Winnipeg	Canada	45000
	Ep	Edmonton	- Myron (Michael Daciuk) * 1919	Edmonton, Alb.	Canada	35000
	Ep	New Westminster	- [vacant]	New Westminster, B. C.	Canada	6000
	Ep	Saskatoon	+ Basil (Filievich) * 1918	Saskatoon, Sask.	Canada	15500
	Ep	Toronto	+ Isidore (Borecky) * 1911	Toronto, Ont.	Canada	80000
	Ep	Sts. Peter and Paul of Melbourne	+ Peter (Stasiuk) * 1943	North Melbourne	Australia	25000
	Ep	St. John the Baptist's at Curitiba	+ Efraim (Basilio Krevey) * 1928	Curitiba	Brazil	140000
	Ep	St. Mary's » del Patrocínio « at Buenos Aires +	+ Andrés (Sapelak) * 1911	Buenos Aires	Argentina	125000
	ApEx	Germany	+ Platon (Kornyljak) * 1920, tit. B of Castra Martis Munich	Munich	Germany	25340
	ApEx	Great Britain	+ Michael (Kuchmiak) * 1923, tit. B of Agathopolis London	London	Great Britain	15000
	ApEx	France	+ Michel (Hrynychyshyn) * 1929, tit. B of Zigris Paris	Paris	France	16000
						5523274*

Other hierarchs

- + Volodymyr (Sterniuk) * 1907, tit. AB of Marcianopolis, auxiliary to the Major Archbishop
- + Maxim (Hermaniuk) * 1911, Emeritus of Winnipeg
- + Ivan (Prasko) * 1914, Bemeritus of Sts. Peter and Paul of Melbourne
- + Philemon (Kurchaba) * 1913, tit. B of Abrilltum, auxiliary to the Major Archbishop
- + Julian (Voronovsky) * 1936, tit. B. of Deultum, auxiliary to the Major Archbishop
- + Myroslav (Stefan Marusyn) * 1924, AB, tit. B of Cadi, Secretary, Congregation for the Oriental Churches
- + Volodymyr (Walter Paska) * 1923, tit. B of Tigillava, auxiliary to the Metropolitan of Philadelphia

↓ Augustine (Eugene Hornyak) * 1919, tit. B of Hermonthis, former Ap. Exarch in Great Britain
 ↓ Roman (Dánylák) * 1930, tit. B of Nissa, Ap. Admin. »sede plenaria« of Toronto

13. Hungarian Church		
Ep Hajdúdorog	+ Szilárd (Keresztes)	Nyiregyháza
ApEx Miskolc	+ Szilárd of Hajdúdorog, Ap. Adm.	Hungary Micsény

ORDINARIATS FOR FAITHFUL OF ORIENTAL TRADITIONS HAVING NO ORDINARY OF THEIR OWN

Argentina	+ Antonio card. Quaracino, AB of Buenos Aires	110000
Austria	+ Hans Hermann card Groér, AB of Vienna [Byzantine rite faithful]	4000
Brazil	+ Eugenio card. de Araújo Sales, AB of São Paulo	10000
France	+ Jean-Marie card. Lustiger, AB of Paris	45000
Poland	+ Józef card. Glemp, AB of Warsaw [Armenian rite faithful]	?

In this survey, the following order was observed:
 rank of the ecclesiastical unit, its titular and his year of birth, his place and country of residence and the number of faithful.

Abbreviations:

AB = Archbishop; AEp = Archeparchy; ApAdm = Apostolic Administration; ApEx = Apostolic Exarchate; B = Bishop; Ep = Eparchy; M = Metropolitan, Metropoly; P = Patriarchate; PEp = patriarchal exarchate; pont. = pontifical;
 tit. = titular.

Compiled according to the
ANNUARIO PONTIFICIO 1994
 by John Maday

Book Review

Paul Pallath (ed.), Catholic Eastern Churches: Heritage and Identity, Mar Thoma Yogam, Rome 1994, pp. 307.

The purpose of this book, fruit of the initiative of Paul Pallath, is to provide "a general idea of the common heritage of the Oriental Churches and to emphasize the obligation of all Christian faithful to preserve the authentic Oriental identity of their Churches" (Introduction, 3).

These two fundamental orientations (the common heritage and the preservation of the Oriental identity) explain the division of the work into three parts and furthermore the selection of the essays and their contents.

The first part of the book is dedicated to the presentation of the different common aspects of the Oriental Churches; it explains what makes all of them "Oriental" among the different Churches of the Catholic communion. The essays of this part thus elucidates the different aspects of Oriental identity. J. Madey in "Catholic Oriental Churches – A General Introduction" (pp. 8-23) gives a description of the 21 *sui iuris* Oriental Churches with indications of their origin, canonical status, relationship with the Latin Church and their spread in the diaspora. After a clear presentation of the Oriental liturgical heritage by Manel Nin (pp. 24-45), an original and rich synthesis of Oriental theology by Edward G. Farrugia is given (pp. 46-75) which begins with the theme of *penthos* and then gradually unfolds the common theological elements of the various Oriental Churches. T. Spidlik, a master of Oriental spirituality, in his article "The Spiritual Heritage of the Christian East" (pp. 76-86), gives a short and synthetic presentation of some fundamental themes of Eastern spirituality like heart, consciousness of grace, flight from the world, prayer, contemplation and love. The essay of I. Zuzek, "Common Canons and Ecclesial Experience in the Oriental Catholic Churches" (pp. 87-123) is broad and profound; he indicates the continuity that connecting the sacred canons of the first millennium with the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* (CCEO), presenting in a particular way the complex history of the experience of the Catholic Oriental Churches and their canonical expression. At the end of this part D. Salachas presents a study on "Common Canonical Patrimony of the Oriental Catholic Churches" (pp. 124-136) in which he touches upon important themes like the significance

of "custom" in CCEO, the reestablishment of the traditional Oriental sacramental discipline, the ecumenical significance of CCEO, etc.

The second part deals especially with the second aim of the book as mentioned above; and is in fact dedicated to *The Preservation of Heritage and Organic Growth*. Four articles are presented in this part. The first two, which are very coherent, prove the legitimacy and necessity of preserving the heritage of the Oriental Churches. The will of the popes concerning the preservation of the heritage is very clear (P. Pallath, "The Teaching of the Popes Concerning the Heritage and Identity of Eastern Churches", pp. 139-162), and therefore the task of the pastor in this regard is particularly emphasized (J. Varanath, "The Role of the Pastor in the Preservation of the Patrimony of Oriental Churches", pp. 163-176).

The other two essays face the problem of organic growth in two delicate points: the liturgical continuity and its compatibility with external interventions; the relationship between the past and future in Tradition. The first is studied by P. Maniyattu ("Foreign Interventions in the Liturgical Traditions", pp. 177-211); he concludes that no liturgy is an island and the exchange between liturgies is possible as is shown by history; however, we have to be beware of the forceful introduction of elements that are foreign to a particular liturgical tradition. The second is the object of an articulated and interesting essay of E. G. Farrugia ("Within Living Memory: Tradition the Shape of the Future", pp. 212-228) which evidences the tension of Tradition, whose organ is memory, towards the future; the concretization of Tradition in traditions which are the maturation of Tradition itself is not denied but rather substituted through a process which is the ensemble of enrichment and preservation of the integrity of memory. Finally the risk of fundamentalism, which is a dead language, is dealt with.

The third part of the book descends from the general to the particular. After having spoken in general about the heritage which makes "Oriental" some Churches of the Catholic communion, the last part proceeds to the analysis of the proper heritage of a particular Church, the Syro-Malabar Church. All the essays of this last part are filled with great interest and a profound tension towards the evaluation of the identity of the Malabar Church. First of all, there is a short historical Introduction (J. Perumthottam, "Syro-Malabar Church - a Short Historical Introduction", pp. 231-242). Afterwards, a consistent study by C. Payngot dedicated to the liturgical particularities of the Malabar Church ("Some Particular Elements in the Liturgical Tradition of the St. Thomas Christians", pp. 243-271), points out the particular elements in the eucharistic celebration, the feasts, the fasts, some paraliturgical customs like agape etc. It also indicates carefully what the introduction of the Latin practices has caused in the liturgical continuity of the Malabar Church; the author sees in

the "uncompromising zeal" of the Latin missionaries (p. 271) the cause of the elimination of some of the liturgical particularities and holds that they should be recovered. According to J. Chalassery ("The Spiritual Heritage of St. Thomas Christians" [Marthomakristyanikal], pp. 272-295) "the spirituality of St. Thomas Christians emerging from the mingling of the Catholic faith, Oriental form of worship and the Indian culture appears to be an ideal one. It is the fruit of the biblical and patristic synthesis of the Catholic faith came through the apostle Thomas and the East Syrian Fathers. It maintains the vertical and horizontal relations of man in balance" (p. 294). Finally J. Koikakudy in the article "The Particular Canonical Institutions of the Syro-Malabar Church", (pp. 296-307) makes an interesting presentation of the characteristic institutions of the Malabar Church like the *archdeacon* who was administering the entire Malabar Church; the *pallyyogam*, an assembly of the heads of the family and the clergy of the parish under the presidency of the Pastor; and the *kaikars* or the immediate lay collaborators of the pastor in the parish. Moreover, Koikakudy holds that the Malabar Church has suffered a diminution of the sense of identity; and this resulted in a limitation since "for any progress, whether of the individual or of the community, the sense of identity is essential". His conclusion which well expresses also the sensibility of other authors of the third part, is very explicit: "the Syro Malabar Church...has no reason to be, unless it is Syro-Oriental and Indian" (p. 307).

The work, besides what can be said in such a short note, is rich in information, interest and sincerity. It deserves the serious reading and meditation of all, especially if it is true, as Pope John Paul II writes, that "the words of the West need the words of the East, so that God's word may ever more clearly reveal its unfathomable riches" (*Orientale lumen*, 28).

Basilio Petri
Prof. Pontifical Oriental Institute
& Accademia Alfonsiana, Rome

News

Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy transferred to Thamarassery

Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy, the first bishop of Mananthavady diocese of the Syro-Malabar Archiepiscopal church of India, has been transferred by the Holy Father to the diocese of Thamarassery which became vacant by the death of Mar Sebastian mankuzhikary, its first bishop. Monsignor Joseph Kaniamattom' has been appointed the archiepiscopal administrator of the diocese of Mananthavady by the Major Archbishop Mar Antony Padiyara.

A new Christian sect poses threat to the church in Portugal

A new sect known as *Universal Church of the Kingdom of God* is creating serious concern to the Church in Portugal. This new sect which has its origin in Brazil is founded by Edir Macedo. Its followers are estimated to be about 3 million. The way this sect amasses wealth in Portugal creates great concern to the government of Portugal. So also the Church in Portugal is worried about the flow of Catholics to this sect.

Commission for the Asian Synod

His Holiness Pope John Paul II has appointed His Grace Mar Joseph Powathil, Metropolitan Archbishop of Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Changanacherry, and Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Menampampil SDB , Archibishop of Guwahati, as members of the special commission from India for the preparation of the Asian Synod. The commission was convened last October in Rome.

Syro-Malabar Bishops' Synod in Rome

An extra-ordinary Assembly of the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Archiepiscopal Church will take place in Rome from 15 to 22 January, 1996. The Congregation for the Oriental Churches had sent a special commission consisting of Monsignor Claudio Gujaroti, Fr. Michael Mulhal and Abbot Michael Van Parrys, to discuss the details of the Agenda of the Synod. The role of the Synod, the identity of the church, Liturgy, Formation of the priests and the religious and the religious life, Laity, Ecumenism etc. are some of the topics of the Agenda.

Fr. Matthew Vellanickal as member of the Commission for Ecumenical Dialogue

Fr. Matthew Vellanickal, Professor of Sacred Scripture and the former President of Paurastya Vidyapitham of Vadavathoor, Kottayam, India has been appointed by His Holiness as member of the Commission for the Ecumenical Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian church. He is already a member of the Commission for the Ecumenical dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches of India.

Catholic-Orthodox Dialogue at Kottayam, India

The seventh dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church took place from 9 to 13 October, 1995 at Sophia Centre, Kottayam, India. Archbishop Dr. Pierre Duprey and Dr. Paulose Mar Gregorios led the Catholic and the Orthodox representatives respectively. One of the decisions agreed upon in the meeting was to jointly publish all the documents available on the common heritage of these Churches.

The Chaldean Syrian Churches of the East United

The Chaldean syrian Churches of the East have come to unity. The decision was signed by the bishops and Trustees of both Churches on November 13, at Trichur, India. This historical agreement ends the 31 year old split of the Chaldean Syrian Church into the Patriarchal group and the Bishop's group.

The agreement was signed by the bishops and trustees of both the groups. Mar Varsai of Lebanon and Mar Milis of Australia, the two representatives of the Patriarch, led the discussion for unity. The agreement accepts His Holiness Mar Dinha IV the Patriarch of the Church of the East as the Supreme head. There will be an episcopal Council to look after the Church in India. His Grace Mar Arpem of Trichur will be the head of the Indian Church.

According to the agreement all the suits pending in civil courts will be cancelled and there will be a mutual recognition of the priesthood. The unity within the Church of the East is a milestone in the ecumenical aspect.

INDEX

1995 Vol. XVI

March, No. 1

Ecclesiology

The Ecclesial Vision of Fr. Placid J. Podipara

Xavier Koodapuzha p. 3

Margasastra of the Acts of the Apostles and the

Mar Thoma Nasranis of India

Kurian Valuparampil p. 15

Ecclesiological Basis of Church Structures

George Madathikandathil p. 29

Documentations

p. 39

June, No. 2

Liturgy

The Origin and the Development of the East Syrian

Lectionary Systems

Kannokadan Pauly p. 54

The Feast of the Pure Gold

Pauly Maniyattu p. 64

Biblical Allusions in the Pre-anaphoral Part of

the Syro-Malabar Qurbana

Thomas Mannooramparampil p. 74

Receptionism and the Mar Thoma Epiclesis

Philip Tovey p. 84

September, No. 3

Spirituality

The Theological Anthropology of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana

Sebastian Athappilly CMI p. 99

Celebrative Ethics Ecological Problems and Syro-Malabar Qurbana

Paulachan Kochappilly CMI p. 117

Mar Aprem : Patron of Eco-Theology

Paulose Pottampuzha p. 138

December, No. 4

Ecumenism

Ecumenical Dimension of Canon Law

George Dmitry Gallaro p. 151

Conciliar Unity: A Model for Ecumenism

George Mathew p. 162

Orientale Lumen : An Evaluation from the Syriac Perspective

Dr. Joseph Kallarangatt p. 169

The Catholic Churches of Oriental Tradition

John Madey p. 180

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